



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Wednesday, 20 December, 2023

1. The House met at 11.06 a.m. Mr Deputy Speaker read the Prayers.
2. The House recited the National Pledge.
3. **Votes and Proceedings**
Mr Deputy Speaker announced that he had examined and approved the *Votes and Proceedings* of Tuesday, 19 December, 2023.

The Votes and Proceedings was adopted by unanimous consent.

4. **Matters of Urgent Public Importance (Standing Order Eight, Rule 4)**
 - (i) **Robbery Attack and Gruesome Killing of Amotekun Officers and a Citizen in Ikere-Ekiti, Ekiti State:**
Hon. Ojuawo Rufus Adeniyi (*Ekiti South West/Ikere/Ise Orun Federal Constituency*) introduced the matter and prayed the House to:
 - (a) consider and approve the matter as one of urgent public importance; and
 - (b) suspend Order Eight, Rule 4 (3) to allow debate on the matter forthwith.

Question that the matter be considered as one of urgent public importance — Agreed to.

Question that the House do suspend Order Eight, Rule 4 (3) to enable it debate the matter forthwith — Agreed to.

Robbery Attack and Gruesome Killing of Amotekun Officers and a Citizen in Ikere-Ekiti, Ekiti State:

The House:

Notes that the security of lives and properties of Nigerians is the primary purpose of governance as provided under section I4 (2) (b) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended);

Also notes that on Wednesday, 13 December, 2023, Ikere a relatively peaceful town in Ekiti South Federal Constituency I was invaded by heavily armed gunmen;

Aware that the attackers who are well-armed and organized. gained access to both Access and WEMA bank and cat- away unspecified amount of money;

Also aware that the armed robbery attack lasted hours causing panic and chaos in the community resulting in the loss of lives of 2 Officers of Amotekun and a citizen;

Worried that despite the long period of the incident. no immediate security agency response was reported;

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Inspector General of Police to investigate the incident and bring the perpetrators to book;
- (ii) observe a minute silence in respect of those that were killed during the incident;
- (iii) mandate the Committee on Police Affairs to ensure compliance (*Hon. Ojuawo Rufus Adeniyi — Ekiti South West/Ikere/Ise Orun Federal Constituency*).

Debate.

Agreed to.

The House:

Noted that the security of lives and properties of Nigerians is the primary purpose of governance as provided under section I4 (2) (b) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended);

Also noted that on Wednesday, 13 December, 2023, Ikere a relatively peaceful town in Ekiti South Federal Constituency I was invaded by heavily armed gunmen;

Aware that the attackers who are well-armed and organized. gained access to both Access and WEMA bank and cat- away unspecified amount of money;

Also aware that the armed robbery attack lasted hours causing panic and chaos in the community resulting in the loss of lives of 2 Officers of Amotekun and a citizen;

Worried that despite the long period of the incident. no immediate security agency response was reported;

Resolved to:

- (i) urge the Inspector General of Police to investigate the incident and bring the perpetrators to book;
- (ii) observe a minute silence in respect of those that were killed during the incident;
- (iii) mandate the Committee on Police Affairs to ensure compliance (**HR. 412/12/2023**).

(ii) **Implementation of the New Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) Aptitude Test Policy for Direct Entry Candidates:**

Hon. Muhammad Muktar (*Kazaure/Roni/Gwiwa/Yankwashi Federal Constituency*) introduced the matter and prayed the House to:

- (a) consider and approve the matter as one of urgent public importance; and
- (b) suspend Order Eight, Rule 4 (3) to allow debate on the matter forthwith.

Question that the matter be considered as one of urgent public importance — Agreed to.

Question that the House do suspend Order Eight, Rule 4 (3) to enable it debate the matter forthwith — Agreed to.

Implementation of the New Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) Aptitude Test Policy for Direct Entry Candidates:

The House:

Notes that the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) on Monday through its Registrar announced that from 2024, it will conduct an aptitude test for all Direct Entry candidates to assess their academic potential as well as their mental or physical capacity.

Also notes that the test will not be the conventional subject-based assessments like Mathematics, Chemistry, Government, Physics and others, but instead focuses on areas such as verbal, abstract, mechanical, and numeric reasoning, data checking, and work sampling;

Further notes that the Board has decided to conduct special registrations for all Direct Entry candidates, subjecting them to extensive scrutiny and imposing mandatory fees during economically challenging times;

Concerned that this policy or move directly challenges and undermines the capacity and integrity of institutions awarding Higher Education Diplomas across this country. It also questions the validity of the certificates awarded to potential graduates of these institutions;

Aware of the rigorous process and academic journey that the A'level (Advanced level) holders have undergone, which distinctively sets them apart from the O'level holders (ordinary level) in terms of academic advancement and preparedness for higher education;

Also concerned that such policy could potentially discourage students from pursuing higher education and further exacerbate existing educational inequalities;

Further concerned that the board has not been considerate to parents who have struggled through every means to support their children's education throughout high education. Imposing undue financial strain on parents during these economically challenging periods;

Resolves to:

- (i) urge JAMB to immediately suspend the implementation of the proposed aptitude test policy, emphasizing the need for sensitivity to the economic challenges faced by students and their families;
- (ii) demand a Detailed Rationale from JAMB for this policy, particularly in light of the current economic climate and its potential to discourage higher education;

- (iii) mandate the Committee on Tertiary Education to examine the financial implications of this policy on students and their families, and its impact on access to education (*Hon. Muhammad Muktar — Kazaure/Roni/Gwiwa/Yankwashi Federal Constituency*).

Debate.

Agreed to.

The House:

Noted that the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) on Monday through its Registrar announced that from 2024, it will conduct an aptitude test for all Direct Entry candidates to assess their academic potential as well as their mental or physical capacity.

Also noted that the test will not be the conventional subject-based assessments like Mathematics, Chemistry, Government, Physics and others, but instead focuses on areas such as verbal, abstract, mechanical, and numeric reasoning, data checking, and work sampling;

Further noted that the Board has decided to conduct special registrations for all Direct Entry candidates, subjecting them to extensive scrutiny and imposing mandatory fees during economically challenging times;

Concerned that this policy or move directly challenges and undermines the capacity and integrity of institutions awarding Higher Education Diplomas across this country. It also questions the validity of the certificates awarded to potential graduates of these institutions;

Aware of the rigorous process and academic journey that the A'level (Advanced level) holders have undergone, which distinctively sets them apart from the O'level holders (ordinary level) in terms of academic advancement and preparedness for higher education;

Also concerned that such policy could potentially discourage students from pursuing higher education and further exacerbate existing educational inequalities;

Further concerned that the board has not been considerate to parents who have struggled through every means to support their children's education throughout high education. Imposing undue financial strain on parents during these economically challenging periods;

Resolved to:

- (i) urge JAMB to immediately suspend the implementation of the proposed aptitude test policy, emphasizing the need for sensitivity to the economic challenges faced by students and their families;
- (ii) demand a Detailed Rationale from JAMB for this policy, particularly in light of the current economic climate and its potential to discourage higher education;
- (iii) mandate the Committee on Tertiary Education to examine the financial implications of this policy on students and their families, and its impact on access to education (**HR. 413/12/2023**).
- (iii) ***Need to Repair the Issele-Uku - Asaba Express Road, Delta State:***
Hon. Okolie Ngozi Lawrence (*Aniocha North/Aniocha South Federal Constituency*) introduced the matter and prayed the House to:

- (a) consider and approve the matter as one of urgent public importance; and
- (b) suspend Order Eight, Rule 4 (3) to allow debate on the matter forthwith.

Question that the matter be considered as one of urgent public importance — Agreed to.

Question that the House do suspend Order Eight, Rule 4 (3) to enable it debate the matter forthwith — Agreed to.

Need to Repair the Issele-Uku - Asaba Express Road, Delta State:

The House:

Notes that the Issele-uku - Asaba express road in Aniocha/Oshimili Federal Constituency is a high commuter road within and across the state which aids and facilitates the conduct of commercial activities both within and outside the State;

Also notes that the road is of satisfactory convenience to the commuters in the transportation of their agricultural produce which is of overall benefit to the nation's economy especially as it is the major road linking states within the southern region of the country;

Aware of the substantial damage inflicted upon this critical commuter road, which poses a severe risk of causing serious mishaps along the route and causing a significant impediment to the safe movement of people and goods;

Worried that with the present state of the road, commercial activities of the residents are immensely affected, and could result in a paralyzed economic activity within that region and ultimately leading to the loss of millions of Naira worth of goods;

Also aware that due to the increased price of air fares there would be a surge in the use of road travel to and fro the different destinations with access to this road and with its current state, the road poses a danger to travellers;

Observes that if the situation of the road is attended to and fixed, it would boost economic activities in the region in particular and also in the country in general;

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing to immediately commence repairs on the failed section of the Issele-Uku - Asaba express road or in the alternative, enter an agreement with the state Government to fix the roads and be reimbursed in the near future;
- (ii) mandate the Committees on FERMA, and Legislative Compliance to ensure compliance (*Hon. Ngozi Okolie — Aniocha/Oshimili Federal Constituency*).

Debate.

Agreed to.

The House:

Noted that the Issele-uku - Asaba express road in Aniocha/Oshimili Federal Constituency is a high commuter road within and across the state which aids and facilitates the conduct of commercial activities both within and outside the State;

Also noted that the road is of satisfactory convenience to the commuters in the transportation of their agricultural produce which is of overall benefit to the nation's economy especially as it is the major road linking states within the southern region of the country;

Aware of the substantial damage inflicted upon this critical commuter road, which poses a severe risk of causing serious mishaps along the route and causing a significant impediment to the safe movement of people and goods;

Worried that with the present state of the road, commercial activities of the residents are immensely affected, and could result in a paralyzed economic activity within that region and ultimately leading to the loss of millions of Naira worth of goods;

Also aware that due to the increased price of air fares there would be a surge in the use of road travel to and fro the different destinations with access to this road and with its current state, the road poses a danger to travellers;

Observed that if the situation of the road is attended to and fixed, it would boost economic activities in the region in particular and also in the country in general;

Resolved to:

- (i) urge the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing to immediately commence repairs on the failed section of the Issele-Uku - Asaba express road or in the alternative, enter an agreement with the state Government to fix the roads and be reimbursed in the near future;
- (ii) mandate the Committees on FERMA, and Legislative Compliance to ensure compliance (**HR. 414/12/2023**).

5. Presentation of Bills

The following Bills were read the *First Time*:

- (1) Federal Technical College, Nasarawa Burkullu, Zamfara State (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.1049).
- (2) Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps Trust Fund (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.1050).
- (3) Unified and Special Operations Forces (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.1051).
- (4) Pension Reforms Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB. 1052).
- (5) Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB. 1053).
- (6) National Research Institute for Chemical Technology (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB. 1054).
- (7) National Agency for Technology Incubation Act (Repeal and Enactment) Bill, 2023 (HB. 1055).
- (8) Compulsory Treatment and Care for Victims of Gunshots Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB. 1056).
- (9) Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.1057).
- (10) Federal University of Technology, Osogbo (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.1058).

- (11) National Apprenticeship Scheme Bill, 2023 (HB. 1059).
- (12) National Eye Centre Act (Amendment) Bill, 2003 (HB. 1060).
- (13) National Ear Centre Bill, 2023 (HB. 1061).
- (14) National Security Agencies Act (Repeal and Enactment) Bill, 2023 (HB. 1062).
- (15) National War College Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB. 1063).

6. Consolidation of Bills:

Motion made and Question proposed, “That a Bill for an Act to Amend the Niger Delta Development Commission Act, No. 6, 2000 and for Related Matters (HB.87); a Bill for an Act to Amend the Niger Delta Development Commission Act, No. 6, 2000 and for Related Matters (HB. 154) be now consolidated” (*Hon. Igariwey Iduma Enwo — Afikpo North/Afikpo South Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

7. A Bill for an Act to make Provisions for the Retirement Age for Staff of National Assembly Service and for Related Matters (HB.529) — Third Reading

Motion made and Question proposed, “That a Bill for an Act to make Provisions for the Retirement Age for Staff of National Assembly Service and for Related Matters (HB.529) be now read the Third Time” (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Agreed to.

Bill read the Third Time and passed.

8. A Bill for an Act to Establish Federal University of Sports, Afuze, Edo State and for Related Matters (HB.476) — Third Reading

Motion made and Question proposed, “That a Bill for an Act to Establish Federal University of Sports, Afuze, Edo State and for Related Matters (HB.476) be now read the Third Time” (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Agreed to.

Bill read the Third Time and passed.

9. A Bill for an Act to Establish the Chartered Institute of Loan and Risk Management of Nigeria to provide for the Control of its Membership and promote the practice of Risk Management in Nigeria and for Related Matters (HB.629) — Third Reading

Motion made and Question proposed, “That a Bill for an Act to Establish the Chartered Institute of Loan and Risk Management of Nigeria to provide for the Control of its Membership and promote the practice of Risk Management in Nigeria and for Related Matters (HB.629) be now read the Third Time” (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Agreed to.

Bill read the Third Time and passed.

10. A Bill for an Act to Establish the Nigerian Solid Minerals Company to Receive, Manage and Invest Funds for the Advancement of the Mining Industry and for Related Matters (HB.752) — Second Reading

Motion made and Question proposed, “That a Bill for an Act to Establish the Nigerian Solid Minerals Company to Receive, Manage and Invest Funds for the Advancement of the Mining Industry and for Related Matters (HB.752) be read a Second Time” (*Hon. Gaza Jonathan Gbefwi — Keffi/Karu/Kokona Federal Constituency and Six Others*).

Debate.

Question that the Bill be now read a Second Time — Agreed to.

Bill read the Second Time.

Bill referred to the Committee on Solid Minerals Development.

- 11. A Bill for an Act to Amend the Federal Medical Centres Act to Establish Federal Medical Centre, Okehi, Kogi State to Provide Primary to Tertiary Healthcare Services in all Ramifications and for Related Matters (HB.776) — Second Reading**

Motion made and Question proposed, “That a Bill for an Act to Amend the Federal Medical Centres Act to Establish Federal Medical Centre, Okehi, Kogi State to Provide Primary to Tertiary Healthcare Services in all Ramifications; and for Related Matters (HB.776) be read a Second Time” (Hon. Abdulmaleek Abdulraheem Danga — Adavi/Okehi Federal Constituency).

Debate.

Question that the Bill be now read a Second Time — Agreed to.

Bill read the Second Time.

Bill referred to the Committee on Healthcare Institutions.

- 12. A Bill for an Act to Amend Federal Medical Centres Act and Establish Federal Medical Centre, Fagge, Kano State and for Related Matters (HB. 94) — Second Reading**

Motion made and Question proposed, “That a Bill for an Act to Amend Federal Medical Centres Act and Establish Federal Medical Centre, Fagge, Kano State; and for Related Matters (HB. 94) be read a Second Time” (Hon. Muhammad Bello Shehu — Fagge Federal Constituency).

Debate.

Question that the Bill be now read a Second Time — Agreed to.

Bill read the Second Time.

Bill referred to the Committee on Health Institutions.

- 13. A Bill for an Act to Establish Nigerian Marine Corps to Promote Maritime Security and for Related Matters (HB. 225) — Second Reading**

Motion made and Question proposed, “That a Bill for an Act to Establish Nigerian Marine Corps to Promote Maritime Security; and for Related Matters (HB. 225) be read a Second Time” (Hon. Alex Egbona — Yakurr/Abi Federal Constituency).

Debate.

Question that the Bill be now read a Second Time — Agreed to.

Bill read the Second Time.

Bill referred to the Committees on Navy, and Maritime Safety, Education and Administration.

- 14. Reconsideration of Outstanding Bills from the Preceding Assembly**

Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes that pursuant to Order Twelve, Rule 16 of the Standing Orders of the House, Bills passed by the preceding Assembly and forwarded to the Senate for concurrence for which no concurrence was made or negatived or passed by the Senate and forwarded to the House for which no concurrence was made or negatived or which were passed by the National Assembly and forwarded to the President for assent but for which assent or withholding thereof was not communicated before the end of the tenure of the Assembly, the House may resolve that such Bill, upon being re-gazetted or clean copies circulated, be re-considered in the Committee of the Whole without being commenced *de-novo*;

Also notes that the under-listed Bills were passed by the preceding Assembly and forwarded to the President for assent but for which assent or withholding thereof was not communicated before the end of the tenure of the last Assembly:

- (i) Joint Admission and Matriculation Board Act (Repeal and Enactment) Bill, 2023 (HB. 145),
- (ii) Federal Colleges of Education Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.522),
- (iii) Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.523),
- (iv) National Rice Production, Processing and Research Institute, Igbemo Ekiti, Ekiti State Establishment Bill, 2023 (HB. 584),
- (v) Federal College of Nursing and Midwifery, Ado Ekiti, Ekiti State Establishment Bill, 2023, (HB. 585),
- (vi) Chartered Institute of Cooperative Professionals of Nigeria (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.603),
- (vii) South-East Development Commission (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.626),
- (viii) Federal University of Agriculture, Ugbawka, Nkanu East, Enugu State (Establishment) Bill, (HB. 669),
- (ix) Federal Medical Centres Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB. 670),
- (x) Federal College of Nursing and Midwifery, Obuoffia, Awkunanaw, Enugu State (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB. 671),
- (xi) National Inland Waterways Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB. 748),
- (xii) Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.767),
- (xiii) Federal Medical Centres Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.799),
- (xiv) Federal Medical Centres Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.861),
- (xv) National Metallurgical Training Institute, Onitsha, Anambra State (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB. 966),
- (xvi) Chartered Institute of Public Management of Nigeria (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB. 984),
- (xvii) National Youth Service Trust Fund (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB. 985), and
- (xviii) Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria Act (Repeal and Enactment) Bill, 2023 (HB.1043);

Aware that the Bills were read for the first time as HB. 145, HB. 522, HB. 523, HB. 584, HB. 585, HB. 603, HB. 626, HB. 669, HB. 670, HB. 671, HB. 748, HB. 767, HB. 799, HB. 861, HB. 966, HB. 984, HB. 985 and HB. 1043 respectively;

Resolves to:

Re-commit the Bills to the Committee of the Whole for consideration (*Hon. Francis Ejiroghene Waive — Yakurr/Abi Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

15. Need to Reconstruct Gombe-Biu Road with the Dualization of the Gombe to Muhammadu Buhari Industrial Park in Dadin Kowa, Yamaltu-Deba Local Government Area, Gombe State
Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes that the Gombe-Biu Road is the primary transportation route connecting major cities in the North-East Geopolitical Zone providing over 90% daily access to the neighbouring countries of Chad, Niger, and Cameroun;

Also notes that the deteriorating roads in Nigeria are attributed to insufficient geotechnical studies, inaccurate geological knowledge, inadequate construction design, and use of substandard materials;

Aware that despite government efforts through the Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission, federal highways, including the Gombe-Biu Road, are in deplorable condition, leading to numerous road crashes and insecurity risks;

Also aware that the Federal Government secured funding for the Gombe-Biu road in 2017, but current remedial efforts by the Federal Ministry of Works are insufficient for total repair, requiring urgent intervention;

Observes that the Muhammadu Buhari Industrial Park, designed to attract both local and foreign industries, will benefit from proximity to the reconstructed road for the delivery of manufactured goods and services;

Disturbed that in considering the overall deplorable condition of roads across Nigeria, a 2014 Global Road Safety Facility (World Bank) Report records the country having the highest number of deaths associated with road injuries in Africa, accounting for 52.4% of deaths among 100,000 people;

Worried that the poor state of the Gombe-Biu road has significantly impacted the economic activities of the communities along its corridor, particularly in transporting farm produce and services, leading to a decline in income and livelihoods for the residents;

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Federal Ministry of Works to urgently initiate the reconstruction of the Gombe-Biu highway and dualize the Gombe to Muhammadu Buhari Industrial Park, Dadin Kowa in Yamaltu Deba Local Government Areas, and include the same in the 2024 budget estimates; and
- (ii) mandate the Committees on Works and Legislative Compliance to ensure compliance (*Hon. Inuwa Garba — Yamalt/Deba Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Amendment Proposed:

In Prayer (i), immediately after the words “and include”, *leave out* the words “the same in the 2024 budget estimates”, and *insert* the words “this project in any Supplementary Budget of 2024” (*Hon. Aliyu Ibappa Misau — Misau/Dambam Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Agreed to.

Question on the Motion as amended — Agreed to.

The House:

Noted that the Gombe-Biu Road is the primary transportation route connecting major cities in the North-East Geopolitical Zone providing over 90% daily access to the neighbouring countries of Chad, Niger, and Cameroun;

Also noted that the deteriorating roads in Nigeria are attributed to insufficient geotechnical studies, inaccurate geological knowledge, inadequate construction design, and use of substandard materials;

Aware that despite government efforts through the Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission, federal highways, including the Gombe-Biu Road, are in deplorable condition, leading to numerous road crashes and insecurity risks;

Also aware that the Federal Government secured funding for the Gombe-Biu road in 2017, but current remedial efforts by the Federal Ministry of Works are insufficient for total repair, requiring urgent intervention;

Observed that the Muhammadu Buhari Industrial Park, designed to attract both local and foreign industries, will benefit from proximity to the reconstructed road for the delivery of manufactured goods and services;

Disturbed that in considering the overall deplorable condition of roads across Nigeria, a 2014 Global Road Safety Facility (World Bank) Report records the country having the highest number of deaths associated with road injuries in Africa, accounting for 52.4% of deaths among 100,000 people;

Worried that the poor state of the Gombe-Biu road has significantly impacted the economic activities of the communities along its corridor, particularly in transporting farm produce and services, leading to a decline in income and livelihoods for the residents;

Resolved to:

- (i) urge the Federal Ministry of Works to urgently initiate the reconstruction of the Gombe-Biu highway and dualize the Gombe to Muhammadu Buhari Industrial Park, Dadin Kowa in Yamaltu Deba Local Government Areas, and make provisions for the project in the 2024 Supplementary Budget; and
- (ii) mandate the Committees on Works, and Legislative Compliance to ensure compliance (**HR. 415/12/2023**).

16. Need to Rehabilitate and Construct 65 Kilometres Rural Access Roads within Idanre/Ifedore Federal Constituency

Order read; deferred by leave of the House.

17. Need to Adopt Chinese Yuan Currency to Mitigate the Impact of the Naira's Depreciation.

Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes that the Nigerian economy has experienced substantial shifts regarding the value of the Naira, triggering economic instability and uncertainty;

Also notes that the International Monetary Fund proposed diversification of foreign exchange reserves for central banks of developing countries, including Nigeria;

Further notes that the global economic landscape is evolving and international trade dynamics are shifting, with China assuming a leading role in global trade;

Aware that the People's Republic of China has a stable and globally recognized currency, the Chinese Yuan (CNY), which is gaining recognition in international trade;

Cognizant that adopting the Chinese Yuan as an additional foreign exchange reserve currency might mitigate the adverse effects of Naira depreciation, reduce the risks associated with exchange rate fluctuations, and enhance Nigeria's economic stability. Furthermore, it would enhance Nigeria's trade and economic ties with China, a crucial trading partner.

Resolves to:

Mandate the Committees on Banking Regulations, Banking and Other Ancillary Institutions to liaise with the Central Bank of Nigeria to explore the appropriate mechanisms, policies, and partnerships required for the adoption of the Chinese Yuan (CNY) as an official foreign exchange reserve currency alongside other major international currencies and report within four (4) weeks (*Hon. Jafaru Gambo Leko — Bogoro/Dass/Tafawa Balewa Federal Constituency*).

Debate.

Amendment Proposed:

In the Prayer, immediately after the words “required for the”, *insert* the words “effective implementation of the” (*Hon. Sada Soli — Jibia/Kaita Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Agreed to.

Question on the Motion as amended — Agreed to.

The House:

Noted that the Nigerian economy has experienced substantial shifts regarding the value of the Naira, triggering economic instability and uncertainty;

Also noted that the International Monetary Fund proposed diversification of foreign exchange reserves for central banks of developing countries, including Nigeria;

Further noted that the global economic landscape is evolving and international trade dynamics are shifting, with China assuming a leading role in global trade;

Aware that the People's Republic of China has a stable and globally recognized currency, the Chinese Yuan (CNY), which is gaining recognition in international trade;

Cognizant that adopting the Chinese Yuan as an additional foreign exchange reserve currency might mitigate the adverse effects of Naira depreciation, reduce the risks associated with exchange rate fluctuations, and enhance Nigeria's economic stability. Furthermore, it would enhance Nigeria's trade and economic ties with China, a crucial trading partner.

Resolved to:

Mandate the Committees on Banking Regulations, Banking and Other Ancillary Institutions to liaise with the Central Bank of Nigeria to explore the appropriate mechanisms, policies, and partnerships required for the effective implementation of the adoption of the Chinese Yuan (CNY) as an official

foreign exchange reserve currency alongside other major international currencies and report within four (4) weeks (HR. 416/12/2023).

18. Need to Release Palliatives and Sundry Support for Dry Season farming in the North Central Zone

Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes that on Thursday, November 2, 2023, the National Assembly passed the 217 trillion Naira 2023 Supplementary Appropriation Bill which includes palliative measures like wage awards for emergencies in infrastructure, insecurity and labour demands;

Also notes that Goal 2 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) aims to eradicate hunger by 2030, enhancing small-scale farmers' productivity and income, thus promoting sustainable food production in Nigeria;

Further notes that the Federal Government has declared a national emergency on food security due to rising inflation, making basic foods more expensive, and escalating malnutrition and poverty rates across the country;

Aware that rural communities in North Central are major cereal producers in the country, utilizing terraced savannahs for food production despite the region's unique dry season, which can be improved with irrigation;

Also aware that in the budgetary provisions of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, the sums of Twelve Billion, Five Hundred Million Naira (₦12,500,000,000), and twenty-five Billion Naira (₦25,000,000,000) were proposed for the provision of seedlings, other agricultural inputs, and supplies in the six States in the North Central Zone and dry season farming for an additional 80,000 hectares to the National Agricultural Growth Scheme Programme for the production of wheat, maize, rice, and cassava, including the purchase of assorted inputs for the rainy season nationwide, respectively;

Concerned that recurrent floods in the North Central region have severely impacted food production, threatening farmers' livelihoods and worsening food security issues in the country;

Cognizant that dry-season farming in Nigeria enhances food availability and security and satisfies population needs;

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Federal Ministries of Agriculture and Food Security, and Finance to immediately initiate processes for the prompt distribution of palliative measures as provided in the Supplementary Appropriations Act, 2023 to facilitate and promote dry season farming in the North Central Zone;
- (ii) also urge the Federal Ministry of Water Resources to provide adequate irrigation sources and water supply for agricultural production in the North Central Zone; and
- (iii) mandate the Committees on Agricultural Production and Services, Finance and Water Resources to ensure compliance (*Hon. Ahmed Adamu Saba — Edu/Patigi/Moro Federal Constituency*).

Debate.

Amendment Proposed:

In Prayer (iii), immediately after the words “Water Resources”, insert the words “Nutrition and Food Security” (*Hon. Chike Okafor — Ehime Mbano/Ihite-Uboma/Obowo Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Agreed to.

Question on the Motion as amended — Agreed to.

The House:

Noted that on Thursday, November 2, 2023, the National Assembly passed the 217 trillion Naira 2023 Supplementary Appropriation Bill which includes palliative measures like wage awards for emergencies in infrastructure, insecurity and labour demands;

Also noted that Goal 2 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) aims to eradicate hunger by 2030, enhancing small-scale farmers' productivity and income, thus promoting sustainable food production in Nigeria;

Further noted that the Federal Government has declared a national emergency on food security due to rising inflation, making basic foods more expensive, and escalating malnutrition and poverty rates across the country;

Aware that rural communities in North Central are major cereal producers in the country, utilizing terraced savannahs for food production despite the region's unique dry season, which can be improved with irrigation;

Also aware that in the budgetary provisions of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, the sums of Twelve Billion, Five Hundred Million Naira (₦12,500,000,000), and twenty-five Billion Naira (₦25,000,000,000) were proposed for the provision of seedlings, other agricultural inputs, and supplies in the six States in the North Central Zone and dry season farming for an additional 80,000 hectares to the National Agricultural Growth Scheme Programme for the production of wheat, maize, rice, and cassava, including the purchase of assorted inputs for the rainy season nationwide, respectively;

Concerned that recurrent floods in the North Central region have severely impacted food production, threatening farmers' livelihoods and worsening food security issues in the country;

Cognizant that dry-season farming in Nigeria enhances food availability and security and satisfies population needs;

Resolved to:

- (i) urge the Federal Ministries of Agriculture and Food Security, and Finance to immediately initiate processes for the prompt distribution of palliative measures as provided in the Supplementary Appropriations Act, 2023 to facilitate and promote dry season farming in the North Central Zone;
- (ii) also urge the Federal Ministry of Water Resources to provide adequate irrigation sources and water supply for agricultural production in the North Central Zone; and
- (iii) mandate the Committees on Agricultural Production and Services, Finance, Water Resources, and Nutrition and Food Security to ensure compliance (**HR. 417/12/2023**).

19. Need to Direct Telecommunication Companies to Restrain from Unwarranted Charges on Services not Rendered and Improve Service Delivery

Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes that over two hundred and twenty-two million, five hundred thousand (222,500,000) Nigerians subscribed to telephone services at the end of 2022 according to the National Bureau of Statistics;

Concerned that despite the increasing and remarkable patronage of telecommunications services by Nigerians including low-income earners, rural dwellers and the vulnerable in our society, communication services provided by network carriers are not proportionate with the interest expressed by Nigerians;

Worried that Nigerians pay charges on calls with low voice quality arising from congestions, calls freezing and fluctuating network services;

Cognizant that Nigerians lose valuable business hours and finances due to poor service delivery by these network service providers whilst enriching the service providers to their detriment;

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Nigeria Communications Commission (NCC) to ensure that registered network providers: MTN, Glo, Airtel, and 9mobile provide quality communication services to Nigerians;
- (ii) also urge the Nigeria Communications Commission to abort unwarranted charges on calls that bridge to wrong parties and zero voice; and
- (iii) mandate the Committee on Communications to ensure compliance (*Hon. Emmanuel Ukpong-Udo — Ikono/Ini Federal Constituency*).

Debate.

Agreed to.

The House:

Noted that over two hundred and twenty-two million, five hundred thousand (222,500,000) Nigerians subscribed to telephone services at the end of 2022 according to the National Bureau of Statistics;

Concerned that despite the increasing and remarkable patronage of telecommunications services by Nigerians including low-income earners, rural dwellers and the vulnerable in our society, communication services provided by network carriers are not proportionate with the interest expressed by Nigerians;

Worried that Nigerians pay charges on calls with low voice quality arising from congestions, calls freezing and fluctuating network services;

Cognizant that Nigerians lose valuable business hours and finances due to poor service delivery by these network service providers whilst enriching the service providers to their detriment;

Resolved to:

- (i) urge the Nigeria Communications Commission (NCC) to ensure that registered network providers: MTN, Glo, Airtel, and 9mobile provide quality communication services to Nigerians;
- (ii) also urge the Nigeria Communications Commission to abort unwarranted charges on calls that bridge to wrong parties and zero voice; and

(iii) mandate the Committee on Communications to ensure compliance (**HR. 418/12/2023**).

20. Ravaging effects of Gully Erosion in Yenagoa, Obogoro, Famgbe, Ikolo and other Communities Within and Around the Ikoli River of Bayelsa State

Order read; deferred by leave of the House.

21. Need to Investigate the Loss of Revenue of Over \$60,000,000,000 (Sixty Billion Dollars) only due to Inflated Cash Calls by the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited Joint Venture Agreements:

Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes that the Nigeria National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL) on behalf of the Federal Government operates Joint Ventures and related agreements with private Oil Companies in both Oil and Gas sectors, with the aim of sustainable revenue generation and economic development;

Also notes that the NNPCL, as representatives of the Federal government and Federation have about 60% holding while other partners have the remaining 40%;

Further notes that the joint ventures operate under a "Joint Operating Agreement" that spells out the responsibilities of each of the partners in the ventures;

Concerned that due to bloated Cash Call Costs, the NNPCL Upstream Investment Management Services (NUIMS), a unit under the NNPCL in charge of negotiation of costs (both Capex and Opex) have caused huge losses in the neighbourhood of (\$60,000,000,000) Sixty Billion Dollars over the years;

Also concerned that the activities of NNPCL Upstream Investment Management Services (NUIMS) have resulted in huge revenue losses, fiscal deficits and an alarming debt profile;

Aware of the need to ensure probity, transparency and value for money in the NNPCL Joint Venture operations;

Resolves to:

Mandate the Committees on Finance and Petroleum Resources (Upstream) to conduct a comprehensive investigation on all the NNPCL Joint Venture Operations to determine income and Cash Call costs due to each partner, especially the Federation/FGN and whether due process and diligence were observed in the exercise (*Hon. Chike Okafor — Ehime Mbanjo/Ihite-Uboma/Obowo Federal Constituency*).

Debate.

Agreed to.

The House:

Noted that the Nigeria National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL) on behalf of the Federal Government operates Joint Ventures and related agreements with private Oil Companies in both Oil and Gas sectors, with the aim of sustainable revenue generation and economic development;

Also noted that the NNPCL, as representatives of the Federal government and Federation have about 60% holding while other partners have the remaining 40%;

Further noted that the joint ventures operate under a "Joint Operating Agreement" that spells out the responsibilities of each of the partners in the ventures;

Concerned that due to bloated Cash Call Costs, the NNPC Upstream Investment Management Services (NUIMS), a unit under the NNPC in charge of negotiation of costs (both Capex and Opex) have caused huge losses in the neighbourhood of (\$60,000,000,000) Sixty Billion Dollars over the years;

Also concerned that the activities of NNPC Upstream Investment Management Services (NUIMS) have resulted in huge revenue losses, fiscal deficits and an alarming debt profile;

Aware of the need to ensure probity, transparency and value for money in the NNPC Joint Venture operations;

Resolved to:

Mandate the Committees on Finance and Petroleum Resources (Upstream) to conduct a comprehensive investigation on all the NNPC Joint Venture Operations to determine income and Cash Call costs due to each partner, especially the Federation/FGN and whether due process and diligence were observed in the exercise (HR. 419/12/2023).

22. Need to Remit Accrued 5% Users' Charge of Petroleum Pump Price and Diesel to Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) for Effective Roads Maintenance

Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes that the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) requires improved funding to enhance its efficiency, the Agency's rebirth strategy involves leveraging on the sources of funding provided by law, as lack of funds is a significant challenge that hinders its optimal performance;

Also notes that to underscore the importance of funding to road management and maintenance, Section 4 (1) of the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (Amendment) Act, 2007 provides thus: "the fund of the Agency shall consist of; 5% users' charge on pump price of petrol, diesel and of which 40% will accrue to FERMA";

Concerned that since the commencement of the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (Amendment) Act, 2007 which embodies this provision, the Users' Charge has not been remitted to the Agency which has accumulated to about ₦900 billion;

Disturbed that the perpetual non-remittance of ₦900 billion in user charges on petrol and diesel pumps negatively impacts the Agency's finances and performance consequently affecting the state of federal roads;

Cognizant of the need to remit the user's charge on pump prices of petrol and diesel of about ₦900 billion to the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) in pursuance to Section 4 (1) of the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency Act, 2007 as part of the efforts for increased funding for timely and effective maintenance of the federal roads to foster economic growth and development;

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Ministry of Petroleum Resources, Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation Limited (NNPC), Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA) and Ministry of Finance and Office of the Account General of the Federation to ensure that User's charge on the pump price of petrol and diesel are immediately remitted to FERMA under Section 4 (1) of the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (Amendment) Act, 2007; and

- (ii) mandate the Committees on Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA), and Legislative compliance to ensure compliance (*Hon. Aderemi Abasi Oseni — Ibarapa East/Ido Federal Constituency*).

Debate.

Amendment Proposed:

In Prayer (ii), immediately after the acronym “(FERMA)”, *insert* the words “Finance, Petroleum Resources (Upstream)” (*Hon. Kareem Tajudeen Abisodun — Saki West/Saki East/Atigbo Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Agreed to.

Question on the Motion as amended — Agreed to.

The House:

Noted that the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) requires improved funding to enhance its efficiency, the Agency's rebirth strategy involves leveraging on the sources of funding provided by law, as lack of funds is a significant challenge that hinders its optimal performance;

Also noted that to underscore the importance of funding to road management and maintenance, Section 4 (1) of the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (Amendment) Act, 2007 provides thus: "the fund of the Agency shall consist of; 5% users' charge on pump price of petrol, diesel and of which 40% will accrue to FERMA";

Concerned that since the commencement of the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (Amendment) Act, 2007 which embodies this provision, the Users' Charge has not been remitted to the Agency which has accumulated to about ₦900 billion;

Disturbed that the perpetual non-remittance of ₦900 billion in user charges on petrol and diesel pumps negatively impacts the Agency's finances and performance consequently affecting the state of federal roads;

Cognizant of the need to remit the user's charge on pump prices of petrol and diesel of about ₦900 billion to the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) in pursuance to Section 4 (1) of the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency Act, 2007 as part of the efforts for increased funding for timely and effective maintenance of the federal roads to foster economic growth and development;

Resolved to:

- (i) urge the Ministry of Petroleum Resources, Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation Limited (NNPCL), Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA) and Ministry of Finance and Office of the Account General of the Federation to ensure that User's charge on the pump price of petrol and diesel are immediately remitted to FERMA under Section 4 (1) of the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (Amendment) Act, 2007; and
- (ii) mandate the Committees on Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA), Finance, Petroleum Resources (Upstream), and Legislative compliance to ensure compliance (**HR. 420/12/2023**).

23. Need for the Federal Civil Service to Establish Independent Health Maintenance Organisation (HMO)

Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes that the National Health Insurance Scheme Act, 2004 was repealed and established the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) in 2022, to serve as a regulatory body for health insurance schemes;

Also notes that Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) are mandated to act as intermediaries between hospitals and healthcare providers, operating under the regulatory authority of the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA);

Aware that the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) manages the premium contributions of federal civil servants, acting as both the health maintenance organization (HMO) and the insurance provider;

Observes that the Federal Civil Service is the only federal institution without its own Health Maintenance Organization (HMO), unlike other federal institutions like the Nigerian Armed Forces, Police, Customs, and Immigration;

Concerned that the current arrangement causes federal civil servants to lose their coverage upon retirement despite their career-long premium contributions;

Also concerned that the contributions of federal civil servants have been a major source of distraction to the regulatory and universal health coverage responsibilities of the NHIA;

Worried that the NHIA's regulation and implementation of health insurance schemes for federal civil servants have not prioritized their health, particularly post-retirement;

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) to focus on enhancing its regulatory capacity, while the Federal Civil Service should be tasked with creating its independent HMO;
- (ii) also urge the Head of Service of the Federation to initiate the process of establishing an independent Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) that meets National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) accreditation requirements; and
- (iii) mandate the Committees on Healthcare Services, Public Service Matters, and Labour, Employment and Productivity to ensure compliance (*Hon. Adedayo Adesola Samuel — Apapa Federal Constituency*).

Debate.

Agreed to.

The House:

Noted that the National Health Insurance Scheme Act, 2004 was repealed and established the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) in 2022, to serve as a regulatory body for health insurance schemes;

Also noted that Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) are mandated to act as intermediaries

between hospitals and healthcare providers, operating under the regulatory authority of the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA);

Aware that the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) manages the premium contributions of federal civil servants, acting as both the health maintenance organization (HMO) and the insurance provider;

Observed that the Federal Civil Service is the only federal institution without its own Health Maintenance Organization (HMO), unlike other federal institutions like the Nigerian Armed Forces, Police, Customs, and Immigration;

Concerned that the current arrangement causes federal civil servants to lose their coverage upon retirement despite their career-long premium contributions;

Also concerned that the contributions of federal civil servants have been a major source of distraction to the regulatory and universal health coverage responsibilities of the NHIA;

Worried that the NHIA's regulation and implementation of health insurance schemes for federal civil servants have not prioritized their health, particularly post-retirement;

Resolved to:

- (i) urge the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) to focus on enhancing its regulatory capacity, while the Federal Civil Service should be tasked with creating its independent HMO;
- (ii) also urge the Head of Service of the Federation to initiate the process of establishing an independent Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) that meets National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) accreditation requirements; and
- (iii) mandate the Committees on Healthcare Services, Public Service Matters, and Labour, Employment and Productivity to ensure compliance (**HR. 421/12/2023**).

24. Consideration of Report

- (i) ***A Bill for an Act to Amend the Federal Medical Centres Act and Establish Federal Medical Centre, Okigwe and for Related Matters (HB. 172) (Committee of the Whole):***
Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do consider the Report on a Bill for an Act to Amend the Federal Medical Centres Act and Establish Federal Medical Centre, Okigwe and for Related Matters (HB. 172)" (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Agreed to.

Question that the House do resolve into the Committee of the Whole to consider the Report — Agreed to.

(HOUSE IN COMMITTEE)

(Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

A BILL FOR AN ACT TO AMEND THE FEDERAL MEDICAL CENTRES ACT TO ESTABLISH FEDERAL MEDICAL CENTRE, OKIGWE, IMO STATE; AND FOR RELATED MATTERS

Clause 1: Amendment of the Federal Medical Centres Act, 2023.

The Federal Medical Centres Act, 2023 (hereinafter called "the Principal Act" is amended as set out in this Bill (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House*

Leader).

Question that Clause 1 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 2: Amendment of the Second Schedule.

The Second Schedule to the Principal Act is amended by inserting a new item "3" —

"Federal Medical Centre, Okigwe, Imo State" (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 2 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 3: Citation.

This Bill may be cited as the Federal Medical Centres Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 3 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Explanatory Memorandum:

This Bill seeks to amend the Federal Medical Centres Act, 2023 to Establish Federal Medical Centre, Okigwe, Imo State (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Agreed to.

Long Title:

A Bill for an Act to Amend the Federal Medical Centres Act to Establish Federal Medical Centre, Okigwe, Imo State; and for Related Matters (HB.172) (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Agreed to.

Chairman to report Bill.

(HOUSE IN PLENARY)

Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair, reported that the House in Committee of the Whole considered the Report on a Bill for an Act to Amend the Federal Medical Centres Act and Establish Federal Medical Centre, Okigwe and for Related Matters (HB. 172) and approved Clauses 1 - 3, the Explanatory Memorandum, and the Long Title of the Bill.

Question that the House do adopt the Report of the Committee of the Whole — Agreed to.

(ii) *A Bill for an Act to Amend the Federal Colleges of Education Act, Cap. F8, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to Establish Federal College of Education, Mutum Biyu, Taraba State; and for Related Matters (HB.494) (Committee of the Whole):*

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do consider the Report on a Bill for an Act to Amend the Federal Colleges of Education Act, Cap. F8, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to Establish Federal College of Education, Mutum Biyu, Taraba State and for Related Matters (HB.494)" (Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader).

Agreed to.

Question that the House do resolve into the Committee of the Whole to consider the Report — Agreed to.

(HOUSE IN COMMITTEE)

(Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

A BILL FOR AN ACT TO AMEND THE FEDERAL COLLEGES OF EDUCATION ACT, CAP. F8, LAWS OF FEDERATION OF NIGERIA, 2004 TO ESTABLISH FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, MUTUM BIYU, TARABA STATE AND FOR RELATED MATTERS (HB. 494)

Clause 1: Amendment of the Federal Colleges of Education Act.

The Federal college Education Act, 2004 (hereinafter called "the Principal Act" is amended as set out in this Bill (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 1 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 2: Amendment of the First Schedule.

The First Schedule to the Principal Act is amended by inserting a new item "Y" —

"Federal College of Education, Mutum Biyu, Taraba State" (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 2 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 3: Short Title.

This Bill may be cited as the Federal Colleges Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 3 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Explanatory Memorandum:

This Bill seeks to amend the Federal Colleges of Education Act, 2004 to Establish Federal College of Education, Mutum Biyu, Taraba State (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Agreed to.

Long Title:

A Bill for an Act to Amend the Federal Colleges of Education Act, Cap. F8, Laws of Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to Establish Federal College of Education, Mutum Biyu, Taraba State and for Related Matters (HB. 494) (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Agreed to.

Chairman to report Bill.

(HOUSE IN PLENARY)

Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair, reported that the House in Committee of the Whole considered the Report on a Bill for an Act to Amend the Federal Colleges of Education Act, Cap. F8 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to Establish Federal College of Education, Mutum Biyu, Taraba State and for Related Matters (HB.494) and approved Clauses 1 - 3, the Explanatory Memorandum, and the Long Title of the Bill.

Question that the House do adopt the Report of the Committee of the Whole — Agreed to.

(iii) *A Bill for an Act to Amend the Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria Act, Cap. A12,*

Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 and Establish Federal College of Horticulture, Okigwe and for Related Matters (HB. 171) (Committee of the Whole):

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do consider the Report on a Bill for an Act to Amend the Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria Act, Cap. A12, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 and Establish Federal College of Horticulture, Okigwe and for Related Matters (HB. 171)" (Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader).

Agreed to.

Question that the House do resolve into the Committee of the Whole to consider the Report — Agreed to.

(HOUSE IN COMMITTEE)

(Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

A BILL FOR AN ACT TO AMEND THE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH COUNCIL OF NIGERIA ACT, CAP. A12, LAWS OF THE FEDERATION OF NIGERIA, 2004 TO PROVIDE FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FEDERAL COLLEGE OF HORTICULTURE, OKIGWE, IMO STATE; AND FOR RELATED MATTERS (HB. 171)

Clause 1: Amendment of Cap. A12, LFN, 2004.

The Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria Act, Cap. A12, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 (in this Bill referred to as "the Principal Act") is amended as set out in this Bill (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 1 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 2: Amendment of the Third Schedule.

The Third Schedule to the Principal Act is amended by inserting a new paragraph —

"Federal College of Horticulture, Okigwe Imo State" (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 2 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 3: Citation.

This Bill may be cited as the Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria Act (Amendment) (No.3) Bill, 2023 (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 3 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Long Title:

A Bill for an Act to Amend the Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria Act, Cap. A12, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to Provide for Establishment of the Federal College of Horticulture, Okigwe, Imo State; and for Related Matters (HB. 171) (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Agreed to.

Chairman to report Bill.

(HOUSE IN PLENARY)

Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair, reported that the House in Committee of the Whole considered the Report on a Bill for an Act to Amend the Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria Act, Cap. A12, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 and Establish Federal College of Horticulture, Okigwe and for Related Matters (HB. 171) and approved Clauses 1 - 3, and the Long Title of the Bill.

Question that the House do adopt the Report of the Committee of the Whole — Agreed to.

- (iv) ***A Bill for an Act to Establish Food Vendors Registration Council of Nigeria charged with the Responsibility of Advancing the Registration, Training, and Safe Practice of Raw and Cooked Food Vending Businesses and preventing double Taxation Collection on members of the Council by Unauthorized Bodies in Nigeria and for Related Matters (HB. 326) (Committee of the Whole):***

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do consider the Report on a Bill for an Act to Establish Food Vendors Registration Council of Nigeria charged with the Responsibility of Advancing the Registration, Training, and Safe Practice of Raw and Cooked Food Vending Businesses and preventing double Taxation Collection on members of the Council by Unauthorized Bodies in Nigeria and for Related Matters (HB. 326)" (Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader).

Agreed to.

Question that the House do resolve into the Committee of the Whole to consider the Report — Agreed to.

(HOUSE IN COMMITTEE)

(Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

A BILL FOR AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE FOOD VENDORS
REGISTRATION COUNCIL OF NIGERIA CHARGED WITH THE
RESPONSIBILITY OF ADVANCING THE REGISTRATION, TRAINING,
AND SAFE PRACTICE OF RAW AND COOKED FOOD VENDING
BUSINESSES AND TO PREVENT DOUBLE TAXATION COLLECTION ON
MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL BY UNAUTHORIZED BODIES IN NIGERIA

Clause 1: Scope of the Act. Applicability.

This Bill shall apply to all raw and cooked food and water vendors in the public and private sector in the Federal Republic of Nigeria (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 1 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 2: Establishment of Food Vendors Registration Council of Nigeria.

There is established a body to be known as the Food Vendors Registration Council of Nigeria (in this Bill referred to as "the Council") which:

- (a) shall be a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal;
- (b) may sue and be sued in its corporate name;
- (c) may subject to the Land Use Act, hold, acquire and dispose of any property movable or immovable, purchase or take on lease any interest in land, building, or property;

- (d) build, equip and maintain offices and premises (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 2 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 3: Establishment of the Governing body of the Council and Management.

The Governing body shall be referred to as the "Board" and shall consist of:

- (a) a Chairman who shall be the National Coordinator;
- (b) six persons to represent the personnel of the Council appointed by the National Coordinator; the council will further appoint one amongst the six personnel as secretary of the board;
- (c) one persons to represent the Federal Ministry of Health, appointed by the Minister;
- (d) one person to represent members of the council from each of the six geopolitical zones appointed/elected by the registered members from each zone;
- (e) the members of the governing body of the Council shall be paid such allowance as the Council determine from time to time (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 3 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 4: Powers and Functions of the Governing Body of the Council.

The Council shall:

- (a) determine the basic standard to be attained by persons seeking to become members of the council;
- (b) train the members of the council with updated scientific developments in food safety and hygiene periodically.
- (c) expose members of the council by holding seminars, workshops with world-class technological advancements in the field of food safety and hygiene standard practice;
- (d) organize public campaigns to spread awareness about food and water borne diseases and encourage NGOs to participate in such initiatives;
- (e) translate the training manuals of its members into local languages in Nigeria;
- (f) do anything which in its opinion is calculated to facilitate the carrying out of its activities under the Act including charging fees for its services;
- (g) shall specify the management system of the staff officers of the council including financial approvals;
- (h) have power to borrow or dispose of any property;
- (i) appoint, promote and discipline its employees necessary for the proper discharge of the functions of the council;
- (j) appoint, remove or suspend or discipline personnel of the council and to fix

- their salaries or emoluments where necessary and other conditions of service;
- (k) grant food vendors Ambassadorial and Merit Award to deserving food vendors and persons in Nigeria;
 - (l) consider and report to the Minister upon all matters relating to registration and training of membership;
 - (m) establish committees as deem which shall be charged with the functions of the Council;
 - (n) liaise with the Central Bank of Nigeria and other financial institutions; both National and international for food vendors capacity building and soft loans;
 - (o) carry out such activities as are necessary or expedient for the performance of its functions under this Bill (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 41 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 5: Establishment of the Office of the National Coordinator.

There shall be established the office of the National Coordinator:

- (a) the National Coordinator Shall be the Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Governing body of the council to oversee all its Administrative activities (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 5 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 6: Appointment of the National Coordinator and other personnel of the Council.

- (a) The council shall appoint one person among its most senior employees as National Coordinator of the council for a term of four (4) years in office and be eligible for re-appointment for another term of four (4) years, except the first National Coordinator who shall serve for eight (8) years in office and be eligible for reappointment for another term of four (4) years.
- (b) The National Coordinator shall in addition to his other functions under this Bill be the Chairman of Governing body of the Council.
- (c) The Council may, whenever the National Coordinator is absent or for any other reason of death, incapacity or inability to discharge the function of his office, appoint an acting National Coordinator among the most senior employees to discharge his functions.
- (d) The National Coordinator and other employees shall work on such conditions of service and functions as the council will determine.
- (e) The provisions of the first schedule to this Bill shall have effect with respect to the proceedings of the Council and the other matters therein mentioned.
- (f) The Council shall employ other personnel and establish offices across the 36 states of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory for the proper running of its activities (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 6 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 7: Membership of the Council.

- (1) The membership of the council established by this Bill shall be open to the General Public who are interested to be registered, trained and certified to operate as raw and cooked food and water vendors in Nigeria. A person shall be entitled to be registered as a member of the council if:
 - (a) he has attained the age of eighteen years and above;
 - (b) he has the capital to start up any type of food vending business and is willing to attend the professional training and practicals prescribed by the council;
 - (c) he will provide an evidence of revenue payment to any local government or state where he/she is operating from;
 - (d) he will provide a certificate of fitness from any Government approved hospital;
 - (e) he will provide evidence of being of good character.
- (2) The National Coordinator shall be the signatory to the certificates of registration and training awarded by the council (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 7 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 8: Categories of Membership.

Food vendors membership registration shall be based on the size and category of raw and cooked food vending business the applicant is engaged in. The categories of raw and cooked food and water vendors shall be:

- (a) Fellow Food Vendors (FFV);
- (b) Member Food Vendors (MFV);
- (c) Associate Food Vendors (AFV);
- (d) Assistant Associate Food Vendors (AAFV) (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 8 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 9: Tenure of Office.

- (1) A member of the governing body of the Council appointed other than the Chairman shall hold office for a term of three years, and subject to the provision of sub section (3) of this section, shall be eligible for re-appointment for only one further term of three years.
- (2) The office of member of the governing body of the Council shall become vacant if he resigns as a member of the Council by notice in writing under his hand addressed to the Minister.
- (3) The Minister shall appoint another person to continue in office with recommendation of the body he represents (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 9 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 10: Removal from Office of the governing body of the Council.

- (1) If it appears to the Council that any member other than the Chairman should be removed from office on the grounds of misconduct or of his inability to perform the functions of his office, the Council shall set up a committee to investigate and make recommendations.
- (2) The council will consider and approve the recommendation of the committee and shall declare the office of such a member vacant (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 10 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 11: Transitional Provision.

On the commencement of this Bill:

- (1) all assets and liabilities held or incurred immediately before that day or on behalf of the incorporated Trustees of Food Hygiene Initiative of Nigeria shall by virtue of this Bill and without further assurance, vest in the council and be held by it for the purposes of the council;
- (2) the incorporated trustees shall cease to exist; the National President of the incorporated trustee of Food Hygiene Initiative of Nigeria shall remain in office as the first National Coordinator and Chairman of the governing body of the Council. All staff officers of the incorporated trustees of Food Hygiene Initiative of Nigeria shall by virtue become employee of the council;
- (3) subject to the sub-section (2) of this Bill all things made or done by the incorporated trustees of Food Hygiene Initiative of Nigeria shall be deemed to have been made or done by the council;
- (4) all fees and other money(s) payable to the incorporated trustees of Food Hygiene Initiative of Nigeria;
- (5) such money(s) as may be payable to the incorporated trustees of Food Hygiene Initiative of Nigeria whether in the course of the discharge of its functions or otherwise;
- (6) fees charged for services rendered by the incorporated trustees of Food Hygiene Initiative of Nigeria;
- (7) all sums accruing to the incorporated trustees of Food Hygiene Initiative of Nigeria by way of gifts, endowments, bequests or other voluntary contributions by persons and organizations;
- (8) Foreign aid and assistance from bilateral agencies and grants from the Federal, State or Local Governments;
- (9) such money(s) as are held by the incorporated Trustees of Food Hygiene Initiative of Nigeria incorporated under the Companies and Allied Matters Act, LFN, 2014 (in this Bill hereafter referred to as "the Council") on its ceasing to exist as provided in this Bill shall be vested in the Council and be held by Food Vendors Registration Council of Nigeria at the immediate commencement of this Bill (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 11 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 12: Dissolution of Food Hygiene Initiative of Nigeria.

- (1) On the commencement of this Bill, the Food Hygiene Initiative of Nigeria, of the registered trustees of the Food Hygiene Initiative of Nigeria incorporated under the Companies and Allied Matters Act, LFN, 2004 (in this section referred to as the incorporated trustees) shall cease to exist.
- (2) Accordingly, the incorporated trustee of Food Hygiene Initiative of Nigeria is hereby dissolved and the provision of the second schedule to this Bill shall apply in relation to the employees, assets and leadership of the incorporated trustee of Food Hygiene Initiative of Nigeria, the assets and liabilities of the incorporated trustees of Food Hygiene Initiative of Nigeria and other matters connected with the incorporated trustees set out therein (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonybere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 12 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 13: Financial Provisions.

- (1) The Council shall have power —
 - (a) to open and operate ordinary and domiciliary account for the council in any recognized banking institution.
- (2) The Council shall establish and maintain a fund for the purposes of this Bill.
- (3) All funds shall be paid into the council's accounts —
 - (a) all fees and other money payable to the council in pursuance of this Bill; and
 - (b) such money(s) as may be payable to the council, whether in the course of the discharge of its functions or otherwise.
- (4) These shall be paid out of the fund of the council:
 - (a) the remuneration and allowances of the National Coordinator and other employees of the council;
 - (b) such reasonable travelling and subsistence allowances of the members of the Council in respect of the time spent on the business of the Council shall be determined and paid by the council, and any other expenses incurred by the council in the discharge of its functions under this Bill.
- (5) The council shall keep proper accounts in respect of each financial year and proper records in relation to those accounts, and shall cause its account to be accredited within six (6) months after the end of each financial year by auditors appointed by the council. The fee of the auditors and the expenses of the audit shall be paid from the fund of the council.
- (6) The audited annual account and report shall be submitted by the council to the members of the council at the Annual General Meeting.
- (7) Cost of maintaining the head office at the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja and its other offices located in other states and places in Nigeria.

- (8) Pay for other administrative costs of the staff officers of the council.
- (9) Cost for the training of members and employees.
- (10) All sums accruing to the council by way of gifts, endowments, bequests or other voluntary and/or assistance from liberal agencies, or grants from the federal state or local government (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 13 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 14: Offences and Discipline.

- (1) A person commits an offence when:
 - (a) he holds oneself out as an individual involved in raw or cooked food/water vending service operator;
 - (b) willfully makes false declaration in any matter relating to the registration;
 - (c) goes against any rule and regulations of standard practice with regards to the handling of raw and cooked food and water vending services.
- (2) There shall be an investigative/Disciplinary Committee consisting of three members and two non-members of the council all appointed by the council charged with the responsibility of:
 - (a) investigation into allegations of misconduct by registered member(s);
 - (b) preparing a comprehensive report on investigation carried out and recommendation as guided by the constitution of the council as regards to the disciplinary action including the possibility of being de-registered.
- (3) Any food vendor or food handler, water vendor or handler who violates the provisions of this Bill, or rules and regulations made pursuant to this Bill, shall be subject to summary trial in a magistrate court which shall make such orders, convictions and issue penalties for such offences.
- (4) The disciplinary action reached shall be communicated to the person(s) concerned and the respondent is given a period of 21 days from the date of service to appeal against the decision taken.
- (5) A decision for the removal of a member's name from the register will prohibit an application by the member until the expiration of the decision taken by the council.
- (6) Depending on the gravity of the offence so committed, the court may order the closure of such premises until such fine either prescribed by this Bill or as the court deems fit is complied with (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 14 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 15: Conduct of Proceedings.

- (1) Subject to the provisions of section 174 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (which relates to the power of the Attorney General of the Federation to institute, continue or discontinue criminal proceedings against any person in a court of law), any legal officer under the employment of the council or an external legal practitioner employed by the council may with the consent of the Attorney-General of the Federation, conduct criminal proceedings in respect of offences under this Bill or regulations made under Act.
- (2) In a judicial proceeding for an offence under this Bill or any regulation made under it, the provisions of the Adjudication of Criminal Justice Act, 2015 and any other law applicable in the location shall, with such modifications as the circumstances may require apply to the trial of offences generally.
- (3) The council can be represented in a civil or criminal proceeding by a lawyer under its employment or an external legal practitioner of its choice (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 15 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 16: Legal Proceedings.

- (1) A suit shall only be commenced against the council within two months from the arising of a cause of action.
- (2) No suit shall commence against the council before expiration of a period of two month after a written notice of intention to commence the suit shall have been served on the council by the intending plaintiff or his agent and the notice shall clearly and explicitly state —
 - (a) the cause of action;
 - (b) the particulars of the claim;
 - (c) the name and place of abode of the intending plaintiff; and
 - (d) the relief which he claims.
- (3) The notice referred to in the subsection (2) of this section and any summons, notice or other document required or authorized to be served on the council under the provisions of this Bill or any other enactment or law, may be served by —
 - (a) delivering the same to the National Coordinator of the council; or
 - (b) sending it by registered post addressed to the National Coordinator at the Head office of the council.
- (4) In any action or suit against the council, no execution or attachment or process in the nature thereof shall be issued against the council, but any sum of money which maybe the judgment of the court awarded against the agency shall, subject to any directives given by the council, be paid from the Fund of the council.
- (5) The Federal High Court shall have exclusive jurisdiction to try offences under this Bill (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 16 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 17: Provision of library.

The Council shall —

- (a) provide and maintain a library comprising books and publications for the advancement of knowledge of Food Hygiene, Financial Management and such other books and publications as the Council may think necessary for the purpose;
- (b) encourage research into Food Hygiene, Financial Management and allied subjects to the extent that the Council may, from time to time, if considered necessary (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 17 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 18: Power to make Regulations.

The Council may make regulations —

- (a) to prescribe fees to be paid for services rendered by the council;
- (b) to prescribe the methodologies for private sector payment into the fund of the council;
- (c) any regulations, made under this Bill shall be published in the Gazette as soon as may be after they are made; and the Minister shall as soon as may be after they are so published lay a copy of any such regulation before the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria;
- (d) rules made for the purposes of this Bill shall be subject to confirmation by the council at its next annual meeting or any special meeting of the Council convened for the purpose, and if then annulled shall cease to have effect on the day after the date of annulment, but without prejudice to anything done in pursuance or intended pursuance of any such rules (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 18 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 19: Service Uniform of the Staff Officers of the Council.

There shall be service uniform for the staff officers of the council:

- (i) the members registered as Fellow and Associate members of the council shall comply with annual fees prescribed by the council and they shall pay for their T-Shirt and other materials;
- (ii) the members of the council enrolled by the Council as staff officers shall comply and pay for their service uniform and other service material and also to remain in service for 35 years, inclusive of the term(s) of office from the date of appointment and subject to rules made pursuant to this Bill on issue of professional misconduct;
- (iii) the members of the staff officers of the council only shall be entitled to pension benefits and employees' social insurance of compensation benefits and to hold office either at National or State or Local Government level (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 19 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 20: Pension Benefits.

- (1) Service of the council shall be approved service for the purpose of the Pensions Reform Act and, accordingly, staff officers employed in the council shall be entitled to pensions, gratuity and other benefits, as are prescribed under the Act.
- (2) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (1) of this section, the Council may appoint personnel to any office on terms which preclude the grant of a pension, gratuity or other retirement benefits in respect of that office (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 20 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 21: Employees Social Insurance and Compensation Benefits.

- (1) The personnel of the council shall also be entitled to the benefits accruable from an employer to an employee as contained in the Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund Act provided the employees of the council comply with their terms and responsibilities in Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund Act.
- (2) The Employees Compensation Act, 2010 or any of such later amendment to the Act shall be applicable to the staff officers of the council for only injuries contained while the staff is in the course of his duty for the council (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 21 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 22: Interpretation.

In this Bill, unless the context otherwise requires —

"Appointed day" means the day this Bill comes into force (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words "Appointed day" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Food" includes raw, cooked, sea, farm crops or animal foods (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "Food" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Food Safety" means all measures to ensure that food does not cause harm to the consumer when it is prepared (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words "Food Safety" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Food Hygiene" means all conditions and measures necessary to ensure that safety and suitability of food at all stages of food chain (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words "Food Hygiene" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Food Handler" means any person who directly handles any packaged or unpackaged food (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words "Food Handler" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Staff Officer" means an officer enrolled to render services on behalf of the council (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words "Staff Officer" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Council" means the agency established by section 2 of this Bill (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "Council" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Food vendor" means a person who trades or sells, commercial cooked or uncooked food, whether in the street, hotel or any premises food can be purchased (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words "Food vendor" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Enrolled" in relation to a member, means staff officer of the council (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "Enrolled" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Fees" includes annual subscriptions (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "Fees" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Financial Management" means proper and gainful utilization of funds in business (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words "Financial Management" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Incorporated Trustee" means the Registered Trustee of Food Hygiene Initiative of Nigeria incorporated under the Companies and Allied Matters Act 2014 (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words "Incorporated Trustee" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Premises" include building, lands, tenements, hereditaments, road, air and sea vehicles, tents, and any structure of any kind (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word “Premises” be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Loan" means financial or monetary support given out to boost business which must be paid back as stated in the condition of disbursement (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word “Loan” be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Trustee" means the Trustee of Food Hygiene Initiative of Nigeria (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word “Trustee” be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Member" mean persons that register as fellow or associate member of the council which includes the National Coordinator and other personnel of the council (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word “Member” be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Minister" means the Minister charged with responsibility for matters relating to Health (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word “Minister” be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Water" includes rain, well; river, pipe borne, borehole or sachet packaged bottled water (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word “Water” be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Water handler" means any person who directly handles any packaged or unpackaged water (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words “Water handler” be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

“Water vendor" means any person who trades or sells, commercial water; whether in the street, hotel or any premises water can be purchased (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words “Water vendor” be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

Question that Clause 22 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 23: Short Title.

This Bill may be cited as Food Vendors Registration Council of Nigeria, (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 23 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

SCHEDULES

FIRST SCHEDULE

SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS RELATING TO THE COUNCIL

Committees

1. (1) The Council may appoint one or more committees to carry out on its behalf such functions as the Council may determine.
- (2) A committee appointed under this paragraph shall consist of the number of persons determined by the Council, of whom not more than one third shall be persons who are not members of the Council and a person other than a member of the Council shall hold office on the Committee in accordance with the terms of the instrument by which he is appointed.
- (3) A decision of a committee of the Council shall be of no effect until it is confirmed by the Council.

Miscellaneous

2. (1) The fixing of the seal of the council shall be authenticated by the signature of the National Coordinator of the council or of some other member of the Council authorised generally or specially by the Council to act for that purpose.
- (2) Any contract or instrument which, if made or executed by a person not being a body corporate, would not be required to be under seal, may be made or executed on behalf of the Council as the case may require, by any person generally or specially authorised to act for that purpose by the Council.
- (3) Any document purporting to be a document duly executed under the seal of the council shall be received in evidence and shall, unless the contrary is proved, be deemed to be so executed.
- (4) The validity of any proceedings of the corps or of a committee of the Council shall not be adversely affected by any vacancy in membership, or by any defect in the appointment of a member of the Council or of a person to serve on the committee, or by reason that a person not entitled to do so took part in the proceedings.
- (5) Any member of the Council, and any person holding office on a committee of the Council, who has a personal interest in any contract or arrangement entered into or proposed to be considered by the Committee on behalf of the Council, or a committee thereof, shall forthwith disclose his interest to the National Coordinator of the council, as the case may be, and shall not vote on any question relating to the contract or arrangement.

Meetings of the Council

3. (1) Subject to the provision of any applicable standing order, the Council shall meet whenever summoned by the Chairman and if the Chairman is required to do so by notice given to him by not less than six other members, he shall summon a meeting of the Council to be held within twenty-one days from the day on which the notice is given.
- (2) At any meeting of the Council, the Chairman in his absence, the Council shall appoint any other member present to preside over the meeting.

- (3) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, the first meeting of the Council shall be summoned by the chairman who may give such direction as to procedure to be followed at that meeting as he may deem fit.
- (4) A committee appointed under this paragraph shall elect the number of persons determined by the Council and not more than one-third of those persons may be persons who are not members of the Council.
- (5) The Council may appoint one or more committee to carry out on behalf of the Council, such of its functions as the Council may determine.
- (6) A person other than a member of the Council shall hold office on a committee in accordance with the terms of the instrument by which he is appointed.
- (7) A decision of the committee shall be of no effect until it is confirmed by the Council.
- (8) The fixing of the seal of the council shall be authenticated by the signature of the chairman or of some other member authorized generally or specially by the Council to act for that purpose.
- (9) Any contract or instrument which if made or executed by a person not being a body (corporate), or would not be required to be under seal, may be made or executed on behalf of the council by any person generally or specially authorized by the Council to act for that purpose.
- (10) The quorum of any meeting of the Council shall be ten (10) members and that of any special meeting of the Council shall be fifteen members (*Hon. Julius Omozuavbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the provisions of the First Schedule stand part of the Bill — Agreed to.

SECOND SCHEDULE

Transitional provision relating to the employees, assets and liabilities of the incorporated trustees of Food Hygiene Initiative of Nigeria registered under the Companies and Allied Matters Act, LFN, 2014 (*Hon. Julius Omozuavbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the provision of the Second Schedule stand part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Long Title:

A Bill for an Act to Establish the Food Vendors Registration Council of Nigeria Charged with the Responsibility of Advancing the Registration, Training, and Safe Practice of Raw and Cooked Food Vending Businesses and to Prevent Double Taxation Collection on Members of the Council by Unauthorized Bodies in Nigeria (HB. 326) (*Hon. Julius Omozuavbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Amendment Proposed:

In line 3, immediately after the word “Council”, *leave out* the words “by Unauthorized Bodies in Nigeria” (*Hon. Kingsley Ogundu Chinda — Obio Akpor Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Agreed to.

Chairman to report Bill.

(HOUSE IN PLENARY)

Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair, reported that the House in Committee of the Whole considered the

Report on a Bill for an Act to Establish Food Vendors Registration Council of Nigeria charged with the Responsibility of Advancing the Registration, Training, and Safe Practice of Raw and Cooked Food Vending Businesses and preventing double Taxation Collection on members of the Council by Unauthorized Bodies in Nigeria and for Related Matters (HB. 326) and approved Clauses 1 - 23, the Schedules, and approved the Long Title of the Bill as amended.

Question that the House do adopt the Report of the Committee of the Whole — Agreed to.

- (v) ***A Bill for an Act to Establish National Assembly Budget and Research Office which Provides the National Assembly with Objective, Timely and Non-Partisan Analysis Needed for Economic and Budget Decisions; and for Related Matters (HB.600) (Committee of the Whole):***

Motion made and Question proposed, “That the House do consider the Report on a Bill for an Act to Establish National Assembly Budget and Research Office which Provides the National Assembly with Objective, Timely and Non-Partisan Analysis Needed for Economic and Budget Decisions; and for Related Matters (HB.600)” (Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader).

Agreed to.

Question that the House do resolve into the Committee of the Whole to consider the Report — Agreed to.

(HOUSE IN COMMITTEE)

(Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

A BILL FOR AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
BUDGET AND RESEARCH OFFICE WHICH PROVIDES THE NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY WITH OBJECTIVE, TIMELY AND NON-PARTISAN
ANALYSIS NEEDED FOR ECONOMIC AND BUDGET DECISIONS;
AND FOR RELATED MATTERS (HB.600)

Clause 1: Establishment of NABRO.

- (1) There is established the National Assembly Budget and Research Office (in this Bill referred to as "the NABRO").
- (2) NABRO shall be a body corporate with perpetual succession and official seal, and shall have power to sue and be sued in its corporate name (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 1 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 2: Functions of NABRO.

The functions of NABRO shall be to —

- (a) provide independent, unbiased and non-partisan analysis of the national budget estimates;
- (b) provide independent unbiased analysis of the budget of the National Assembly and assist all the Committees of the National Assembly in developing their annual budgets;
- (c) provide independent and continuous review of the budget of the Federal Government including monitoring of existing and proposed programmes and budgets;

- (d) provide assistance to all Committees in both Chambers of the National Assembly, including —
 - (i) information with respect to budget and all bills relating to new budget heads,
 - (ii) information with respect to estimated future revenue and changing revenue conditions,
 - (iii) aggregate of all current liabilities and existing financial commitments, and
 - (iv) any related information as the Committees may request;
- (e) provide analysis of the economic implication on the private sector, the budgetary and financial implication on States and Local Governments of any proposed legislation;
- (f) prepare and present to the National Assembly periodic forecasts of economic trends and alternative fiscal policies;
- (g) provide the National Assembly with cost estimates including an analysis of the inflationary impact of any proposed legislation;
- (h) submit to both Chambers of the National Assembly, not later than June every year, a report of —
 - (i) all items funded in the preceding financial year for which no appropriation was made by the National Assembly, and
 - (ii) all items contained in the Appropriation Act in the preceding financial year but which were not funded by the Federal Government;
- (i) publish and disseminate on its website information it generates including reports, analysis, forecasts, etc.;
- (j) submit to both chambers of the National Assembly quarterly report on budget implementation; and
- (k) carry out any other functions as the Board may direct, from time to time (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 2 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 3: Powers of NABRO.

NABRO shall have the power to do all things necessary to or in connection with the performance of its functions, including the power to —

- (a) enter into agreement, acquire, hold and dispose of property;
- (b) procure the services of experts, consultants and organisations;
- (c) enter into partnership or affiliation with any company, firm, organisation, agency or person, which in its opinion will facilitate the discharge of its functions;

- (d) request for, and obtain from, any public enterprise, statistical and other information including reports, memoranda, audited accounts and other information relevant to its functions;
- (e) liaise with relevant bodies or institutions, national or international for effective performance of its functions;
- (f) conduct any study necessary to enable it fulfil its mandate; and
- (g) determine the methodologies needed for use in its works (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 3 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 4: Governing Board.

- (1) There shall be for NABRO, a Governing Board (in this Bill referred to as "the Board").
- (2) The Board shall consist of —
 - (a) the President of the Senate as the Chairman;
 - (b) the Speaker of the House of Representatives as Alternate Chairman;
 - (c) six Members from the Senate and six Members from the House of Representatives representing each geopolitical zone; and
 - (d) the Director-General who shall be a Member and Secretary of the Board.
- (3) The President of the Senate shall, in consultation with the Speaker of the House of Representatives, appoint Members of the Board.
- (4) The Chairman and Members of the Board shall be part-time Members.

Schedule.

- (5) The provisions of the Schedule to this Bill shall apply with respect to proceedings of the Board (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 4 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 5: Powers and functions of the Board.

The Board shall have supervisory authority over NABRO and shall exercise the following powers —

- (a) appointment and discipline of Directors in accordance with the Civil Service Rules of the Federal Republic of Nigeria;
- (b) approval and ratification of appointments, promotion and discipline of professional analysts and other professional staff of NABRO, as may be recommended by the Management Committee in accordance with the Civil Service Rules of the Federal Republic of Nigeria;
- (c) approval of NABRO budget subject to ratification by National Assembly;

- (d) making regulations and guidelines for the operation of NABRO;
- (e) approval of establishment of departments as the need arises; and
- (f) take any action necessary for the proper functioning of NABRO (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 5 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 6: Establishment and functions of the Management Committee.

- (1) There shall be for NABRO a Management Committee consisting of the Director-General and Directors who shall be responsible for —
 - (a) the implementation of the requests from the Committees of the National Assembly and the day-to-day administration of NABRO;
 - (b) making recommendations to the Board on appointment, promotion and discipline of professional staff other than Directors; and
 - (c) any other duty as the Board may direct.
- (2) NABRO shall be structured into functional departments, each to be headed by a Director.
- (3) Subject to the power of the Board to create additional departments, the following departments shall exist —
 - (a) Budget Analysis Department;
 - (b) Research Analysis Department; and
 - (c) Administrative and Services Department.
- (4) Functions and duties of each Department shall be as defined in an operational manual approved by the Board (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 6 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 7: Appointment, duties, tenure and removal of the Director-General.

- (1) The Director-General shall be the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer of NABRO.
- (2) The President of the Senate shall, in consultation with the Speaker of House of Representatives, appoint the Director-General.
- (3) The Director-General shall possess appropriate qualifications and 20 years cognate experience
- (4) The Director-General shall not be a member of a political party.
- (5) The Director-General shall hold office for a term of 4 years and may be eligible for reappointment for another term of 4 years only, provided the Board considers his performance satisfactory.
- (6) The Director-General shall be responsible for the overall operations of NABRO including —

- (a) procuring the temporary, not to exceed one year, of intermitted services of experts, consultants or organizations by contracts as independent contractors, or, in the case of individual experts or consultants, by employment at rates of pay not in excess of the daily equivalent of the highest rate of basic pay payable under the conditions of service in the Federal Civil Service of the Federal Republic of Nigeria;
 - (b) steering and overseeing the provision of analysis of the annual budget estimates of the Federal Government and the implementation of the requests of Legislative Committees;
 - (c) general management and administration of NABRO;
 - (d) controlling and disbursing amounts from funds established in accordance with this Bill; and
 - (e) the establishment of a transparent system and process for the National Assembly budget.
- (7) The Director-General shall secure information, data, estimates and statistics directly from the various departments of the Executive branch of the government and the regulatory agencies and communications of government and all such departments, agencies, establishments, regulatory agencies and commissions shall furnish the Director-General with available material which NABRO determines to be necessary in the performance of its duties and functions other than material disclosure of which would be a violation of this Bill.
- (8) The Director-General is authorised, upon agreement with the head of any such department, agency, establishment, regulatory agency or commission to utilize its services, facilities and personnel with or without reimbursement; and head of each such department, agency or commission is authorised to provide the office such services, facilities and personnel.
- (9) The Director-General shall be removed from office upon a resolution of the appropriate committees in both Senate and House of Representatives on consideration of a recommendation of the Governing Board for the Director-General's inability to discharge the function of the office or for misconduct.
- (10) The Director-General shall resign from office upon giving 3 months written notice of resignation to the Board or payment of 3 months basic salaries in lieu of notice (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 7 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 8: Appointment, duties, tenure and removal of Directors.

- (1) The Directors of the Departments shall be appointed by the Board in a transparent manner and the appointments shall be based solely on professional competence and qualification.
- (2) The Directors shall be professionals in the relevant fields and shall be persons of proven integrity with at least a Master's degree and a minimum of 15 years post qualification and relevant experience.

- (3) The Directors shall not be members of a political party.
- (4) The Directors may be removed from office by the Board upon recommendation of the Director-General for inability to discharge the function of their office or for misconduct.
- (5) A Director may resign his office upon giving 3 months written notice of resignation to the Board or payment of 1-month basic salary in lieu of notice (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 8 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 9: Other staff.

- (1) The Management Committee shall appoint such other staff as may be necessary to carry out the duties and functions of NABRO in accordance with the Civil Service Rules of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and such appointments shall be made solely on the basis of qualification and competence.
- (2) In carrying out the duties and functions of NABRO, the Management Committee may procure the services of experts or consultants by contract, subject to ratification by the Board (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 9 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 10: Remuneration of Directors, professional analysts and staff.

- (1) The Directors, professional analysts and professional staff of NABRO shall receive such remuneration as shall be determined by the Board.
- (2) Such remuneration shall be competitive (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 10 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 11: Remuneration of other staff. Cap. P4, LFN, 2004.

- (1) Service in NABRO shall be approved service for the purpose of the Pensions Reform Act, and accordingly, officers and other persons employed in NABRO in respect of their service shall be entitled to pension, gratuities and other retirement benefits as are enjoyed by persons holding equivalent grades in the public service of the Federation.
- (2) Nothing in subsection (1) of this section shall prevent the appointment of a person in NABRO on terms which preclude the grant of a pension or gratuity in respect of service in NABRO (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 11 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 12: Regulations.

The Board may, by regulations first laid before the National Assembly, and published in the Gazette prescribing the —

- (a) duties and responsibilities of the Director-General, Directors, Professional Analysts, and other staff of NABRO;

- (b) disciplinary control of employees of NABRO and mode of appeal by such employees against dismissals or other disciplinary measure;
- (c) administrative or organizational structure of NABRO;
- (d) promotion and staff welfare; and
- (e) other guidelines (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 12 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 13: Funds and estimates of expenditure.

- (1) NABRO shall establish and maintain a Fund which shall be applied towards the discharge of its functions.
- (2) NABRO shall derive its funds from —
 - (a) such monies as may, in each year, be approved by the National Assembly under the Appropriation Act for the purposes of carrying out the duties and functions of NABRO;
 - (b) such monies as may, from time to time, be granted or deposited with NABRO by the National Assembly or anybody or institution within the country;
 - (c) all monies raised for the purposes of NABRO by way of gifts, loans, grants-in-aid, testamentary dispositions or otherwise; and
 - (d) proceeds from other assets that may, from time to time, accrue to NABRO.
- (2) Such monies derived for the purpose of running NABRO shall be declared to the National Assembly who shall then appropriate such funds before spending except for grants in aids attached to programme or projects.
- (3) NABRO shall defray from the Fund all expenditures incurred by it and shall include —
 - (a) the cost of administration;
 - (b) the payment of salaries, fees or other remunerations or allowances and pensions and gratuities payable to members and employees of NABRO; and
 - (c) anything done in connection with any of its functions under this Bill.
- (4) The Director-General shall prepare, not later than 30th June of each year, an estimate of the expenditure and income of the office for the succeeding year which shall be submitted to the Board for approval.
- (5) The Director-General shall keep accounts and receipts, payments, assets and liabilities and shall in respect of each year prepare a statement of account in such form as the National Assembly may direct.
- (6) The Director-General, shall within 3 months after the end of the financial year to which the account relates, cause the account to be audited by auditors

appointed from the list and in accordance with guidelines supplied by the Auditor-General of the Federation (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 13 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 14: Obtaining of data by the Director-General.

The Director-General may, for the purpose of coordinating the operations of NABRO with those of the National Assembly agencies, obtain information, data, estimates and statistics developed by the Committees, Clerk and all other offices of the National Assembly (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 14 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 15: Obtaining data from public bodies.

- (1) The Director-General shall, through collaboration, obtain information, data, estimates and statistics from ministries, extra-ministerial departments, government parastatals, agencies, commissions and establishments; and all such ministries, extra-ministerial departments, government parastatals, agencies, commissions and establishments shall furnish the Director-General with all materials that are necessary in the discharge of NABRO's duties.
- (2) The Director-General may, upon agreement with the head of any ministry, extra-ministerial departments, parastatals, agency, commission or establishment, utilise its services, facilities and personnel as needed by NABRO.
- (3) The Director-General may assign professional and other staff of NABRO to any ministry, extra-ministerial department, parastatals, agency, commission or establishment including joint ventures where government is a party for the purpose of obtaining primary data and statistics.
- (4) The Director-General may assign professional staff or consultants to conduct surveys as may be required by NABRO.
- (5) A ministerial department and agency shall submit information, data, estimates and statistics as requested by NABRO.
- (6) Any person who refuses or neglects to submit information, data, estimates and statistics as requested by NABRO commits an offence and is liable on conviction to —
 - (a) be dismissed in line with the Civil Service Rules if he is in the employment of the Civil Service of the Federation; or
 - (b) a fine of ₦2,000,000 if he is an appointee of government (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 15 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 16: Annual report.

The Board shall not later than three months after receipt of the audit report of each year, submit to each House of the National Assembly, the report of the activities and the operations of the Board during the immediate preceding year and shall include report of the audited accounts of the Board (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 16 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 17: Power to accept gifts.

- (1) NABRO may accept gifts of land, money or other property on such terms and conditions, if any, as may be specified by the person or organisation making the gift.
- (2) NABRO shall not accept any gift if the conditions attached by the person or organisation making the gift are inconsistent with the functions of NABRO (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 17 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 18: Power to borrow.

Subject to general guidelines issued by the Government of the Federation, NABRO may borrow by way of loan or over draft from any source within the country, such specified amount required by NABRO for meeting its obligations and discharging its functions under this Bill (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 18 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 19: Procedure for suit against NABRO.

- (1) Subject to the provisions of this Bill, the provisions of the Public Officers Protection Act shall apply in relation to any suit instituted against any officer or employee of the NABRO.
- (2) Notwithstanding anything contained in any other law or enactment, no suit shall lie against any member of the Board, the Director-General or any other officer or employee of the NABRO for any act in pursuance or execution of this Bill or any other law or enactment, or of any duty or authority or in respect of any alleged neglect or default in the execution of this Bill or such law or enactment, duty or authority, shall lie or be instituted in any court unless —
 - (a) it is commenced within three months next after the act, neglect or default complained of; or
 - (b) in the case of a continuation of damage or injury, within six months next after the ceasing thereof (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 19 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

9

Clause 20: Service of summons.

A notice, summons or other document required or authorised to be served upon the NABRO under the provisions of this Bill or any other law or enactment may be served by delivering it to the Director-General or by sending it by registered post and addressed to the Director-General at the principal office of NABRO (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 20 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 21: Indemnity of members.

A member of the Board, the Director, Director any officer or employee of the NABRO shall be indemnified out of the assets of NABRO against any proceeding, whether civil or criminal, in which judgment is given in his favour or in which he

is acquitted, if any such proceeding is brought against him in his capacity as a member of the Board, the Director-General, officer or employee of the NABRO (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 21 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 22: Acquisition of property by NABRO. Cap. L5, LFN, 2004.

(1) For the purposes of providing offices and premises necessary for the performance of its functions under this Bill, the NABRO may, subject to the Land Use Act —

(a) purchase or take on lease any interest in land, or other property; and

(b) construct offices and premises and equip and maintain same.

(2) The NABRO may, subject to the Land Use Act, sell or lease out any office or premises held by it, which office or premises is no longer required for the performance of its functions under this Bill (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 22 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 23: Interpretation.

In this Bill —

"Committees" means committees established under the rules of both the Senate and the House of Representatives (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "Committees" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"misconduct" means misconduct as provided in the Code of Conduct for Public Officers (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "misconduct" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"property" means land or building and includes intellectual property (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "property" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"public bodies" means any corporation, board, company or parastatals established by, or under enactment in which the Government of the Federation, a ministry, or extra-ministerial department, agency, or equity interest and include a partnership, joint venture, or any form of business arrangement or organization; and (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words "public bodies" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"NABRO" means National Assembly Budget and Research Office (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the abbreviation “NABRO” be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

Question that Clause 23 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 24: Citation.

This Bill may be cited as the National Assembly Budget and Research Office (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 24 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

SCHEDULE

Section 4 (5)

SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION RELATING TO THE BOARD, ETC.

1. (1) At any meeting of the Board, the Chairman shall preside and in the absence of the Chairman, the alternate Chairman or such member of the Board as the other members may elect among themselves for that purpose.
- (2) The Director-General shall be the Secretary and shall provide secretariat services for all meetings of the Board.
- (3) Subject to the provisions of this Bill and section 27 of the Interpretation Act, the Board may make standing orders regulating its proceeding or those of any of its Committees.
2. The quorum of the Board shall be four members of the Board.
3. The Board may appoint one or more Committees to carry out, on behalf of the Board, such of its functions as the Board may determine, but no decision of any such Committee shall have effect unless ratified by the Board.
4. The Board may co-opt persons who are not members of the Board to any meeting of the Board or any Committee and such persons may take part in the deliberations of the Board or any Committee but shall not be entitled to vote.
5. The fixing of the seal of NABRO shall be authenticated by the signature of the Chairman or any other member of the Board generally or specifically authorized by the Board to act for that purpose and the Director-General.
6. A document purporting to be a document duly executed under the seal of NABRO shall be received in evidence and shall, unless the contrary is proved, be presumed so executed.
7. The validity of any proceeding of the Board or a Committee shall not be adversely affected by —
 - (a) the validity in the membership of the Board or Committee;
 - (b) a defect in the appointment of a member of the Board or Committee; or
 - (c) reason that a person not entitled to do so, took part in the proceeding of the Board or Committee (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the provisions of the Schedule 1 stand part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Explanatory Memorandum:

This Bill seeks to establish the National Assembly Budget and Research Office which provides the National Assembly with objective, timely and non-partisan analysis needed for economic and budget decisions (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Agreed to.

Long Title:

A Bill for an Act to Establish the National Assembly Budget and Research Office Which Provides the National Assembly with Objective, Timely and Non-Partisan Analysis Needed for Economic and Budget Decisions; and for Related Matters (HB.600) (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Agreed to.

Chairman to report Bill.

(HOUSE IN PLENARY)

Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair, reported that the House in Committee of the Whole considered the Report on a Bill for an Act to Establish National Assembly Budget and Research Office which Provides the National Assembly with Objective, Timely and Non-Partisan Analysis Needed for Economic and Budget Decisions; and for Related Matters (HB.600) and approved Clauses 1 - 24, the Schedule, the Explanatory Memorandum, and the Long Title of the Bill.

Question that the House do adopt the Report of the Committee of the Whole — Agreed to.

(vi) ***A Bill for an Act to Establish the Nigeria Hunters and Forest Security Service (NHFSS) to Prevent and Combat Forest Crimes and Enhance Security Within Nigerian Forests and for Related Matters (HB.90) (Committee of the Whole):***

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do consider the Report on a Bill for an Act to Establish the Nigeria Hunters and Forest Security Service (NHFSS) to Prevent and Combat Forest Crimes and Enhance Security Within Nigerian Forests and for Related Matters (HB.90)" (Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader).

Agreed to.

Question that the House do resolve into the Committee of the Whole to consider the Report — Agreed to.

(HOUSE IN COMMITTEE)

(Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

A BILL FOR AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE NIGERIA HUNTERS AND FOREST SECURITY SERVICE (NHFSS) TO PREVENT AND COMBAT FOREST CRIMES AND ENHANCE SECURITY WITHIN NIGERIAN FORESTS; AND FOR RELATED MATTERS (HB.90)

PART I — ESTABLISHMENT, GOVERNING BOARD AND FUNCTIONS OF THE SERVICE

Clause 1: Establishment of the Nigeria Hunters and Forest Security Service.

(1) There is established the Nigeria Hunters and Forest Security Service ("the Service)", which shall consist of such number of officers and other ranks as may, from time to time, be recruited under the provisions of this Bill.

- (2) The Service —
- (a) shall be a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal;
 - (b) may sue and be sued in its corporate name;
 - (c) shall have its Headquarters in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja; and

shall have offices in all the States of the Federation, Local Government Areas and FCT Area Councils (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonybere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 1 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 2: Functions and powers of the Service.

- (1) The Service shall —
- (a) assist in the prevention, detection and combatting illegal activities in the Nigeria forests;
 - (b) provide security to farmers in the forest in collaboration with relevant security agencies;
 - (c) provide security to farmers in the forest in collaboration with relevant security agencies;
 - (d) make available to relevant authorities, information on any encroachment of Nigeria forest spaces;
 - (e) partner with relevant stakeholders on forest security network; and
 - (f) carry out any assigned duty or function as may be directed by the Minister.
- (2) The Service shall have power to —
- (a) seize any properties used in the commission of crime in the forest and handover such properties to relevant agencies for investigation and prosecution;
 - (b) arrest and hand over to the police or any other appropriate security agency for further investigation and prosecution of any person who is suspected to be involved in any criminal activities within the forest;
- (3) Subject to relevant approvals, the Service shall maintain an Armed Squad, which shall bear arms and such other gadget as may be necessary for the discharge of its functions under this Bill (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonybere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 2 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 3: Governing Board.

- (1) The Immigration and Prisons Services Board established under the Immigration and Prisons Services Board Act, Cap. I2, LFN, 2004, (as amended), shall be the Governing Board of the Service under this Bill and have general control of the Service.
- (2) The supplementary provisions set out in the Schedule to this Bill shall, in addition to the provisions contained in the Immigration and Prisons Services Board Act, Cap. I2, LFN, 2004 (as amended), have effect with respect to the proceedings of the Board under this Bill and the other matters contained in it (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 3 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 4: Powers of the Board.

- (1) The Board shall be responsible for —
 - (a) providing the general policies and guidelines relating to the activities and programmes of the Service;
 - (b) the overall management and general administration of the Service;
 - (c) recruiting volunteers and regular members of the Service;
 - (d) organising basic development and refresher courses for members of the Service; and
 - (e) fixing, with the approval of the Minister, the terms and conditions of service of members and employees of the Service, including their remuneration.
- (2) The Board shall have power to do such other things which in its opinion are necessary to ensure the efficient performance of the functions of the Service (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 4 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

PART II — APPOINTMENT OF COMMANDER-GENERAL, DEPUTY
COMMANDERS-GENERAL AND OTHER STAFF OF THE SERVICE

Clause 5: Commander-General of the Service.

- (1) There shall be for the Service a Commander-General, who shall be appointed by the President and subject to confirmation of the Senate.
- (2) The Commander-General shall be the chief accounting officer of the Service and be responsible for the day-to-day administration of the Service.
- (3) The Commander-General shall hold office —
 - (a) for a term of four years in the first instance and may be re-appointed for a further term of four years and no more; and
 - (b) on such terms and conditions as may be specified in the letter of appointment (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 5 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 6: Deputy Commanders-General, etc and other employees of the Service.

- (1) The Board shall, as it may deem necessary, appoint for the Service such number of —
 - (a) Deputy Commanders-General;
 - (b) Commanders;
 - (c) officers; and
 - (d) other ranks and employees.
- (2) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (1) of this section, the Service may appoint volunteers for the purpose of performing temporary duty assigned by the Service.
- (3) The terms and conditions of service, including remuneration, allowances, benefits and pensions of officers and employees of the Service shall be as determined by the Board using same criteria as obtainable for paramilitary agencies under the control of the Board.
- (4) The volunteers appointed by the Service shall, for any period they are on duty for the Service, be paid such allowances and other benefits as may be approved by the Minister (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 6 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 7: Membership of the Service.

- (1) The Service shall consist of such number of volunteers and regular members as may, from time to time, be recruited by the Board to meet the requirements of the Service and performance of its functions.
- (2) Members of the Service shall be made up of such officers and other ranks as the Board may, from time to time, determine (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 7 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 8: Pension.

- (1) The Service shall be approved service for the purposes of the Pension Reform Act, regular members and employees of the Service shall be entitled to pensions, gratuities and other retirement benefits as prescribed under the Pension Reformed Act.
- (2) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (1) of this section, nothing in this Bill shall prevent the appointment of a person to any office on terms which preclude the grant of a pension, gratuity or other retirement benefit in respect of that office.
- (3) For the purposes of the application of the provisions of the Pensions Reforms Act, any power exercisable by the Minister or other authority of the Federal Government, other than the power to make regulations under this Bill, is vested in and shall be exercisable by the Service and not by any other person or authority (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 8 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

PART III — FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

Clause 9: Funds of the Service.

The Service shall establish and maintain a fund into which shall be paid and credited all —

- (a) subventions and budgetary allocation from the Federal Government; and
- (b) the sums accruing to the Service, from time to time (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 9 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 10: Expenditure of the Service.

The Service may, from time to time, apply the proceeds established under this Bill —

- (a) to the cost of administration of the Service;
- (b) to the payment of salaries, fees, or other remuneration or allowances, benefits, gratuities payable to the officers, employees and volunteers of the Service;
- (c) for the maintenance of any property vested in the Service; and (d) for and in connection with all or any of its functions under this Bill (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 10 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 11: Annual estimates and accounts.

- (1) The Service shall, not later than 31st October of every year, submit to the Minister an estimate of its income and expenditure, including payments to the Service Fund, during the next succeeding year.
- (2) The Service shall keep proper accounts in relation to accounts of the Service, and shall cause those accounts to be audited within six months after the end of every financial year by auditors appointed from the list and in accordance with the guidelines supplied by the Auditor-General for the Federation (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 11 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 12: Annual report.

The Service shall prepare and submit to the Federal Executive Council through the Minister, not later than six months after the end of each year, a report in such form as the Minister may direct on the activities of the Service during the immediate preceding year, and shall include in such report a copy of the audited accounts of the Service for that year and the auditor's report on the accounts (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 12 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 13: Power to accept gift.

- (1) The Service may accept any gift of land, money or other property on such

terms and conditions, if any, as may be specified by the person or organisation making the gift.

- (2) The Service shall not accept any gift if the conditions attached by the person or organisation offering the gift are inconsistent with the functions of the Service (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 13 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 14: Power to borrow.

- (1) The Service may, from time to time, by overdraft or otherwise, borrow such sums as it may require for the performance of its functions under this Bill.
- (2) Notwithstanding subsection (1) of this section, where the sum to be borrowed exceeds, the amount set by the Minister or is in foreign currency, the service shall not borrow the sum except with the prior approval of the Minister (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 14 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 15: Investment.

The Service may, subject to the provisions of this Bill and the conditions of any trust created in respect of any property of the Service, invest any of its funds in any security prescribed by the Trustee Investments Act or in such other securities as may, from time to time, be approved by the Minister (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 15 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 16: Exemption from tax.

- (1) The Service shall be exempted from the payment of any income tax on any income accruing from investments subject to the powers of the Board for the Service.
- (2) The provisions of any enactment relating to the taxation of companies or trust funds shall not apply to the Service or the Board (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 16 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

PART IV — MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Clause 17: Discipline of a member of the Service,

A member of the Service who —

- (a) carries out his duties in contravention of the objects of the Service;
- (b) takes part in any subversive activities, including mutiny and disturbance of public peace;
- (c) abets, incites, conceals or condones the commission of any offence;
- (d) takes part in an illegal assembly of persons with intention to breach public peace, destroy property or assault any person or group of persons;
- (e) having knowledge that an offence or any illegal act is about to be committed, fails to inform the Service or senior officer of the Service;

- (f) takes part in a strike or any unrest; and
- (g) offers violent assault on a superior officer, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term of not less than one year (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 17 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 18: Limitation of suits against the service, etc.

- (1) Subject to the provisions of this Bill, the provisions of the Public Officers Protection Act shall apply in relation to any suit instituted against any officer or employee of the Service.
- (2) Notwithstanding the provisions of any other enactment, no suit shall lie or be instituted against any member of the Board or the Commander-General or any other officer or employee of the Service for any act done in pursuance or execution of this Bill or any other enactment or law, or of any public duty or authority or in respect of any alleged neglect or default in the execution of this Bill or any other enactment or law, duty or authority, in any court unless it is commenced —
 - (a) within three months after the act, neglect or default complained of; or
 - (b) in the case of a continuation of damage or injury, within six months after the ceasing thereof.
- (3) Suit shall not be commenced against a member, the Board or the Commander-General or any other officer or employee of the Service before the expiration of a period of one month after written notice of intention to commence the suit have been served on the Service by the intending plaintiff or his agent.
- (4) The notice under subsection (3) of this section shall clearly state the —
 - (a) cause of action;
 - (b) particulars of claim;
 - (c) name and place of abode of the intending plaintiff; and (d) relief which the plaintiff claims (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 18 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 19: Service of documents.

A notice, summons or any document required or authorised to be served on the Service under this Bill or any other enactment or law may be served by delivering it to the Commander-General or by sending it by registered post and addressed to the Commander-General at the principal office of the Service (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 19 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 20: Restriction on execution against the property of the Service.

In any action or suit against the Service, no attachment or process shall be issued

against the Service except as provided under the Sheriffs and Civil Process Act (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 20 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 21: Indemnity of officer of the Service.

A member of the Board or the Commander-General, or any officer or employee of the Service shall be indemnified from the assets of the Service against any liability incurred by such person in defending any proceeding, whether civil or criminal, if a proceeding is brought against the person in his capacity as a member, Commander-General, officer or other employee of the Service (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 21 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 22: Secrecy.

- (1) A member of the Board or the Commander-General of the Service or any other officer or employee of the Service shall —
 - (a) not, for his personal gain, make use of any information within his knowledge in the exercise of his powers or is obtained in the ordinary course of duty as a member of the Board, the Commander-General, officer or employee of the Service;
 - (b) treat as confidential any information within his knowledge in the exercise of his powers or is obtained in the ordinary course of duty in the performance of his duties under this Bill; or
 - (c) not disclose any information referred to under paragraph (b) of this subsection, except when required to do so by a competent court or in such other circumstances as may be authorised by the Board, from time to time.
- (2) A person who contravenes the provisions of subsection (1) of this section, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of not less than ₦200,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 22 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 23: Power to obtain information.

- (1) The Service shall for the purpose of carrying out its functions under this Bill, the Commander-General or any other officer or employee of the Service authorised in that behalf —
 - (a) have access to the records of any person or authority affected by this Bill for the purpose of discharging his duties under this Bill; and
 - (b) may by notice in writing served on any person or premises, require the person or authority to furnish information on such matters as may be specified in notice.
- (2) The person or any authority served with the notice under subsection (1) of this section, shall furnish information requested under subsection (1) of this section and comply with the notice within a reasonable time (*Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 23 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 24: Dissolution of the Nigerian Hunters Group.

The body known as the Nigerian Hunters Group ("the Dissolved Group") existing before the commencement of this Bill is dissolved (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 24 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 25: Savings and transitional provisions.

- (1) As from the commencement of this Bill —
 - (a) all assets, funds, resources and other movable or immovable property, which immediately before the commencement of this Bill were vested in the Dissolved Group shall be vested in the Service established under this Bill;
 - (b) all rights, interests, obligations and liabilities of the Dissolved Group existing before the commencement of this Bill under any contract or instrument, at law or in equity, shall by virtue of this Bill be assigned and vested in the Service;
 - (c) any contract or instrument in paragraph (b) of this subsection shall have the same force and effect against or in favour of the Service and shall be enforceable as if, instead of the Dissolved Group, Service had been named therein or had been a party thereto; and
 - (d) the Service shall be subject to all obligations and liabilities to which the Dissolved Group was subject to before the commencement of this Bill, and all other persons shall, as from the commencement of this Bill have the same rights, power and remedies against the Service as they had against the Dissolved Hunters Group before the commencement of this Bill.
- (2) Any proceeding or cause of action pending or existing before the commencement of this Bill by or against the Dissolved Group in respect of any right, interest, obligations or liability of the Dissolved Group may be commenced, continued or enforced by or against the Service.
- (3) Notwithstanding the provisions of this Bill, but subject to such directions as may be issued by the Service, a person who before the commencement of this Bill was a volunteer or regular member of or held office in the Dissolved Group shall be deemed to have been transferred to the Service on such terms and conditions not less favourable than those obtain immediately before the commencement of this Bill, and service in the Dissolved Group shall be deemed to be service in the Service for the purposes of pension.
- (4) All regular officers of the Dissolved Group before dissolution shall retain their ranks and position at the commencement of this Bill (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 25 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 26: Directives by the Minister, etc.

- (1) The Minister may give to the Service or the Commander-General such directives —

- (a) of a general nature or relating generally to matters of policy with regard to the exercise of its functions; or
 - (b) with respect to the maintenance and securing of public safety and order, as may be considered necessary.
- (2) The Service or the Commander-General shall comply with such directives or cause the directives to be complied with.
- (3) Subject to the provisions of subsection (1) of this section, a Governor of a state may give to a state commander such directives with respect to the maintenance and securing of public safety and order in the Forests within the state as may be considered necessary and it shall be the duty of the state commander to comply with such directives or cause the directives to be complied with (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 26 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 27: Regulations.

The Service may, with the approval of the Minister, make such regulations as may be necessary or expedient to give effects to the provisions and implementation of the provisions of this Bill (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 27 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 28: Interpretation.

In this Bill —

"Board" means the Immigration and Prisons Service Board, 1986, No.14 established under the Immigration and Prison Services Board Act, 1986 (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "Board" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Dissolved Group" means Nigerian Hunters Group existing before the establishment of Nigeria Hunters and Forest Security Service (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words "Dissolved Group" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Minister" means the Minister charged with responsibility for matters relating to interior (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "Minister" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Service" means the Nigeria Hunters and Forest Security Service established under this Bill (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "Service" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

Question that Clause 28 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 29: Citation.

This Bill may be cited as the Nigeria Hunters and Forest Security Service Bill, 2023 (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 29 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

SCHEDULE

Section 1 (1)

ADDITIONAL SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS RELATING TO THE BOARD, ETC.

Proceedings

1. (1) The Board shall, for the purpose of this Bill, meet not less than three times in each year.
- (2) The Board shall meet whenever it is summoned by the Chairman and if the Chairman is required to do so by a notice given to him by not less than five other members, he shall summon a meeting of the Board to be held within fourteen days from the date on which the notice is given.
- (3) Where the Board desires to obtain the advice of any person on a particular matter, the Board may co-opt such person to the meeting of the board for such period as it thinks fit but a person who is a member by virtue of this sub-paragraph shall not be entitled to vote at any meeting of the Board and shall not count towards a quorum.

Committees

2. (1) The Board may appoint one or more committees to carry out, on behalf of the Board, its functions under this Bill as the Board may determine.
- (2) A committee appointed under subparagraph (1) of this paragraph shall consist of such number of persons (not necessarily members of the Board as may be determined by the Board) and a person other than a member of the Board shall hold office in the committee in accordance with the terms of his appointment.
- (3) A decision of a committee of the Board shall be of no effect until it is confirmed by the Board.

Miscellaneous

3. (1) The fixing of the seal of the Service shall be authenticated by the signature of the Chairman or any other person authorized generally or specifically to act for that purpose by the Board and the Commander-General.
- (2) Any contract or instrument, which if made or executed by a person not being a body corporate, would not be required to be under seal, may be made or executed on behalf of the Board by the Commander-General or any person generally or specially authorized to act for the purpose by the Board.
- (3) Any document purporting to be a document duly executed under the seal of the Board shall be received in evidence and shall, unless and until the contrary is proved, be presumed to be so executed (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the provisions of the Schedule stand part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Explanatory Memorandum:

This Bill seeks to establish the Nigeria Hunters and Forest Security Service (the Service), for the prevention and combating of crimes in the Nigeria forests and other related activities of the Service within the Nigerian forests (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Agreed to.

Long Title:

A Bill for an Act to Establish the Nigeria Hunters and Forest Security Service (NHFSS) to Prevent and Combat Forest Crimes and Enhance Security Within Nigerian Forests and for Related Matters (HB.90) (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Agreed to.

Chairman to report Bill.

(HOUSE IN PLENARY)

Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair, reported that the House in Committee of the Whole considered the Report on a Bill for an Act to Establish the Nigeria Hunters and Forest Security Service (NHFSS) to Prevent and Combat Forest Crimes and Enhance Security Within Nigerian Forests and for Related Matters (HB.90) and approved Clauses 1 - 29, the Schedule, the Explanatory Memorandum, and the Long Title of the Bill.

Question that the House do adopt the Report of the Committee of the Whole — Agreed to.

- (vii) ***Ad-hoc Committee on International Boundary Dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon:*** Motion made and Question proposed, “That the House do consider the Report of the *Ad-hoc* Committee on International Boundary Dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon on the Need to Locate Pillar 113A in the Demarcation and/or Ceding of Danare and Biajua Communities of Boki Local Government Area of Cross River State and Sina-Kamale Area of Michika Local Government Area of Adamawa State” (*Hon. Abiante Awaji-Inombek Dagomie — Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Question that the House do resolve into the Committee of the Whole to consider the Report — Agreed to.

(HOUSE IN COMMITTEE)

(Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

Recommendation (i):

“Urge the officials of the Nigerian Government who hold the trust of the Federal Government to demonstrate patriotism and professionalism in discharging official duties” (*Hon. Abiante Awaji-Inombek Dagomie — Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Recommendation (ii):

“Also urge the attention of the National Boundary Commission and the Surveyor General's offices to further call the attention of the United Nations Joint Technical Team on the implementation of the International Court of Justice Judgment of 2002 to follow strictly the specifications given in the said Judgment in tracing and delineating of Nigeria-Cameroon Border from Yola down to Agbokim Etung

in Cross River State, and never to assume or presume to misplace any known PILLAR and unilaterally forcefully deciding to re-locate such PILLAR(S) indiscriminately across border lines thereby disrupting century long peaceful communal communities” (*Hon. Abiante Awaji-Inombek Dagomie — Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Recommendation (iii):

“Further urge the National Boundary Commission and the Surveyor General of the Federation to further call the attention of the working partner of the United Nations Joint Team, to use the ICJ-adopted map to trace the 'missing' PILLAR 113A - 6 miles from the location of PILLAR 113 behind Primary School Danare along the DANARE-BAJE (BADJE)-Cameroon Road, and not DANARE-BIAJUA-Nigerian Road (which is suspiciously unpatriotic and unprofessional conduct on the side of such Nigerian officials)” (*Hon. Abiante Awaji-Inombek Dagomie — Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Recommendation (iv):

“That there is no missing or displacement of the International Pillar 113A which ought to be located in BAJE (BADJE)-CAMEROON-6 miles from established PILLAR 113 at DANARE PRIMARY SCHOOL, but that the officials charged with the duty of tracing such vital pillar either deliberately or unprofessionally went to the wrong direction from the known established ICJ recognized specified measured authenticated coordinates and road directions into a well peacefully settled Nigerian community of DANARE-BIAJUA” (*Hon. Abiante Awaji-Inombek Dagomie — Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Recommendation (v):

that the Nigerian supervisory agencies (the National Boundary Commission and the Surveyor General) should stop collaborating with, or allowing the ulterior interest of Cameroon in deliberately displacing and/or re-locating PILLAR 113A from CAMEROON-BAJE(BADJE) across the BAPUO RIVER into NIGERIA-DANARE-BIAJUA by proposing the obnoxious illegal 'straight-line method' of borderline from PILLAR 113 to PILLAR 114 which will bring about the unsolicited disservice of ceding the NIGERIA-DANARE-BIAJUA community of Boki Local Government Area of Cross River State of Nigeria to the Republic of Cameroon” (*Hon. Abiante Awaji-Inombek Dagomie — Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Recommendation (vi):

“That there should be strict adherence to the ICJ Judgment and sundry Treaties by the implementation team of the National Boundary Commission whereby stakeholders should be carried along in identifying the true colonial historical natural border points which are the basis for any successful international border delimitation and delineation as was adopted by the International Court of Justice (ICJ)” (*Hon. Abiante Awaji-Inombek Dagomie — Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Recommendation (vii):

“That the Federal Government should suspend all further demarcation exercises being carried out by the United Nations Joint Task Team and the National Boundary Commission, and should reinterpret the ICJ Ruling in line with the original intendment of the Treaties, which had respect for traditional boundaries, hence, that the DANARE and BIAJUA communities in Boki Local Government Area of Cross River State and the SINA-KAMALE and other disputed communities in Michika, Mubi North, Mubi South and Madagali Local Government Areas of Adamawa State should be territories

of Nigeria going by the ICJ Ruling that clearly stated that international border lines should be demarcated by natural watersheds, mountains and other natural fault lines” (*Hon. Abiante Awaji-Inombek Dagomie — Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Recommendation (viii):

“That the Federal Government should insist on changing the French Company charged with the contract of demarcating the International Boundaries of Nigeria and Cameroon as the Company has shown bias against Nigerian interests to the benefit of Cameroon like deliberately using wrong coordinates to place beacons and pillars at wrong border points which led to most of the protests by the affected Nigerian communities” (*Hon. Abiante Awaji-Inombek Dagomie — Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Recommendation (ix):

“That all previous traditional boundaries where there is no existing conflict should be respected (instead of the UN JTT and the National Boundary Commission using wrong interpretations of the ICJ ruling to disrupt the peaceful coexistence of border communities)” (*Hon. Abiante Awaji-Inombek Dagomie — Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Recommendation (x):

“That paragraphs 120-124, pages 74 - 75, of the ICJ Judgment stated that 'among other things, it is up to the parties to find solutions to any resultant problem to protect the rights and interests of the local population', be adopted in all boundary delimitation/demarcation exercises” (*Hon. Abiante Awaji-Inombek Dagomie — Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Recommendation (xi):

“That the border development agency (BCDA) should be mandated to establish or site projects in all boundary communities to demonstrate Nigeria's presence in those communities” (*Hon. Abiante Awaji-Inombek Dagomie — Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Recommendation (xii):

“That the defence headquarters should as a matter of urgency build its own permanent 'forward operating base' in Danare Boki Local Government Area of Cross River state to release the Community Health Centre the army has been using presently as its 'forward operating base' so that the community can regain the Health Centre for its health emergency needs” (*Hon. Abiante Awaji-Inombek Dagomie — Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Chairman to report proceedings.

(HOUSE IN PLENARY)

Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair, reported that the House in Committee of the Whole considered the Report of the *Ad-hoc* Committee on International Boundary Dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon on the Need to Locate Pillar 113A in the Demarcation and/or Ceding of Danare and Biajua Communities of Boki Local Government Area of Cross River State and Sina-Kamale Area of Michika Local Government Area of Adamawa State and approved Recommendations (i) - (xii) of the Report.

Question that the House do adopt the Report of the Committee of the Whole — Agreed to.

25. Adjournment

That the House do adjourn till Thursday, 21 December, 2023 at 11.00 a.m. (Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader).

The House adjourned accordingly at 2.13 p.m.

Benjamin Okezie Kalu
Deputy Speaker